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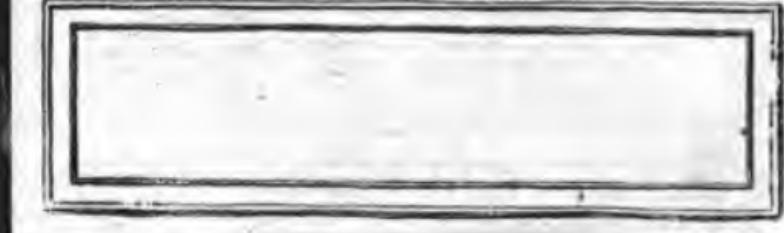
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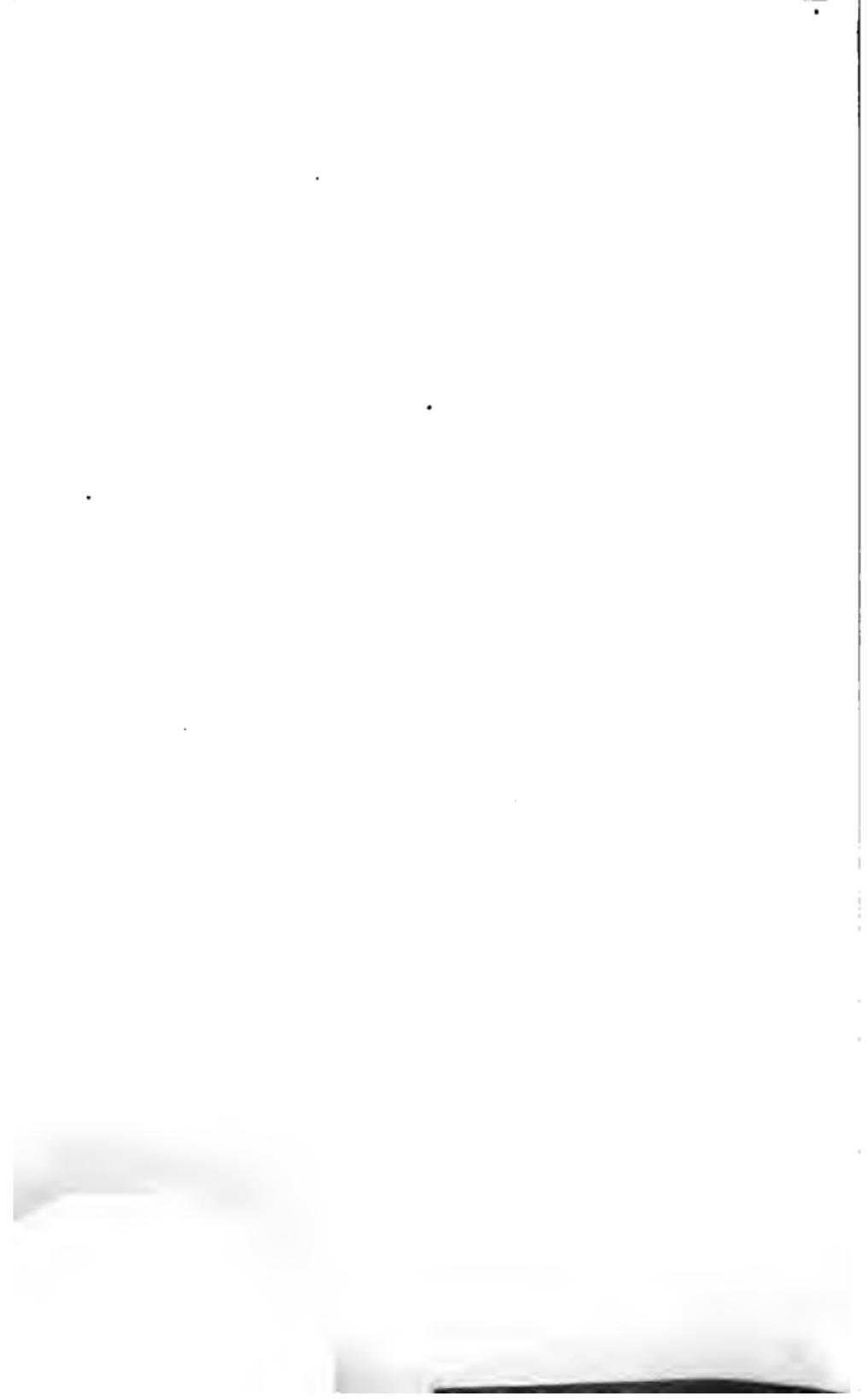
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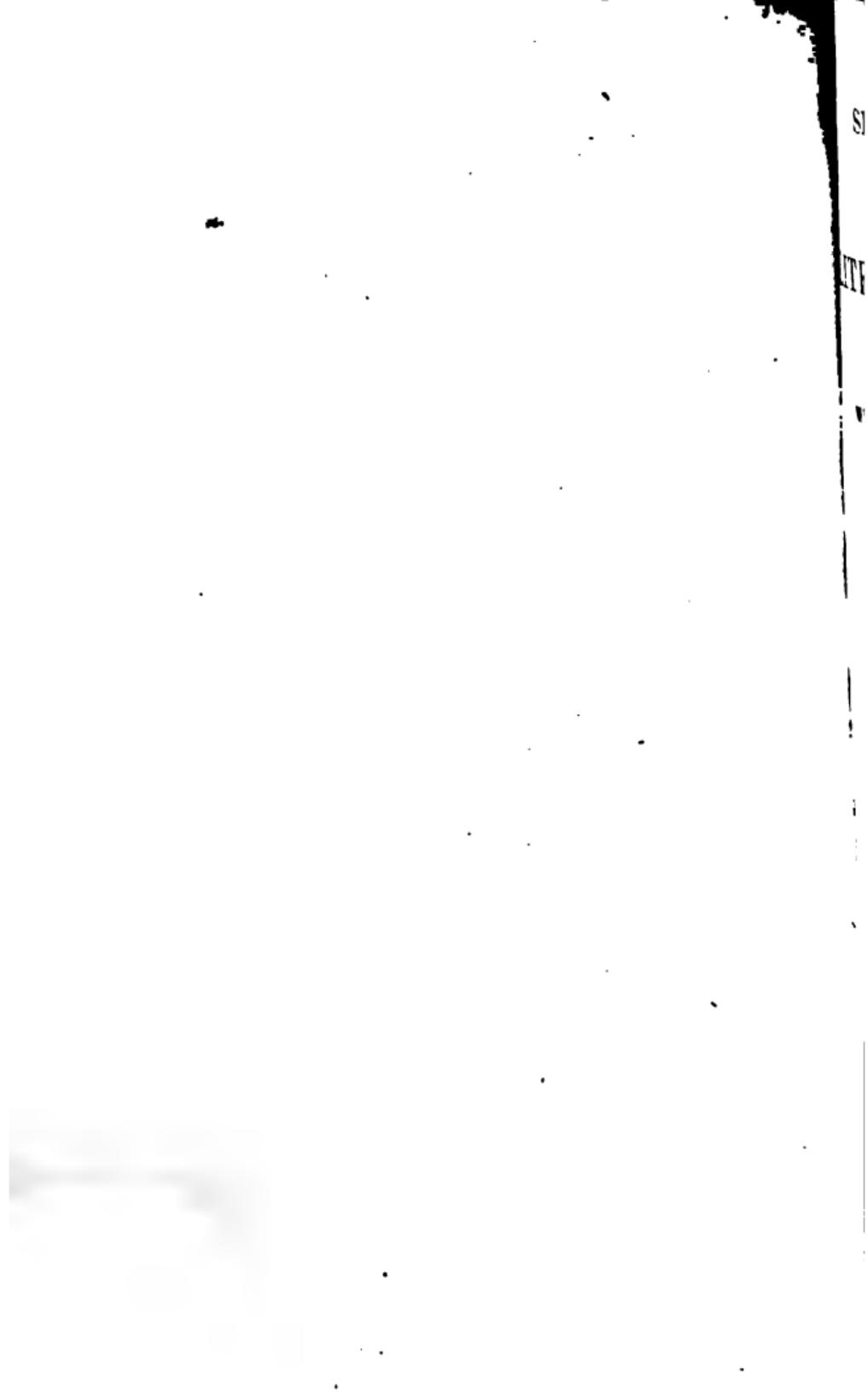












SKETCHES OF THE HISTORY  
OF  
LITERATURE AND LEARNING  
IN ENGLAND.

WITH SPECIMENS OF THE PRINCIPAL WRITERS.

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BY GEO. L. CRAIK, M.A.

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SERIES SECOND (IN TWO VOLUMES).

FROM THE ACCESSION OF ELIZABETH TO  
THE REVOLUTION OF 1688.

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## BOOK V.

### THE ELIZABETHAN LITERATURE.

Or what is commonly called our Elizabethan literature, the greater portion appertains to the reign, not of Elizabeth, but of James—to the seventeenth, not to the sixteenth century. The common name, nevertheless, is the fair and proper one. It sprung up in the age of Elizabeth, and was mainly the produce of influences which belonged to that age, although their effect extended into another. It was born of and ripened by that sunny morning of a new day,—“great Eliza’s golden time,”—when a general sense of security had given men ease of mind and disposed them to freedom of thought, while the economical advancement of the country put life and spirit into every thing, and its growing power and renown filled and elevated the national heart. But such periods of quiet and prosperity seem only to be intellectually productive when they have been preceded and ushered in by a time of uncertainty and struggle which has tried men’s spirits: the contrast seems to be wanted to make the favourable influences be felt and tell; or the faculty required must come in part out of the strife and contention. The literature of our Elizabethan age, more emphatically, may be said to have had this double pa-

rentage : if that brilliant day was its mother, the previous night of storm was its father.

THE MIRROR FOR MAGISTRATES.

Our classical Elizabethan poetry and other literature dates only from about the middle of the reign ; whatever was produced in the earlier half of it, constrained, harsh, and immature, still bears upon it the impress of the preceding barbarism. Nearly coincident with its commencement is the first appearance of a singular work, 'The Mirror for Magistrates.' It is a collection of narratives of the lives of various remarkable English historical personages, taken, in general, with little more embellishment than their reduction to a metrical form, from the common popular chronicles ; and the idea of it appears to have been borrowed from a Latin work of Boccaccio's, which had been translated and versified many years before by Lydgate, under the title of 'The Fall of Princes.' It was planned and begun (it is supposed about the year 1557) by Thomas Sackville, then a very young man, and probably a student of law, afterwards distinguished as a statesman, and ennobled by the titles of Lord Buckhurst and Earl of Dorset. But Sackville soon found himself obliged to relinquish the execution of his extensive design, which contemplated a survey of the whole range of English history from William the Conqueror to the end of the wars of the Roses, to other hands. The two writers to whom he recommended the carrying on of the work were Richard Baldwynne, who was in orders, and had already published a metrical version of the Song of Solomon, and George Ferrers, who was a person of some rank, having sat in

parliament in the time of Henry VIII., but who had latterly been chiefly known as a composer of occasional interludes for the diversion of the Court. It is a trait of the times that, although a member of Lincoln's Inn, and known both as a legal and an historical author, Ferrers was in 1552-3 appointed by Edward VI. to preside over the Christmas revels at the royal palace of Greenwich, in the office of Lord of Misrule : Stow tells us that upon this occasion he "so pleasantly and wisely behaved himself, that the king had great delight in his pastimes."\* Baldwynne and Ferrers called other writers to their assistance, among whom were Thomas Churchyard, Phair, the translator of Virgil, &c. ; and the book, in its first form and extent, was published in a quarto volume in 1559. "The work," says Baldwynne, in his Dedication "To the Nobility" of a subsequent and enlarged edition of it in 1563, "was begun and part of it printed in Queen Mary's time, but hindered by the Lord

\* "On Monday the 4th of January," the Chronicler adds, "the said Lord of Merry Disports came by water to London, and landed at the Tower-wharf, entered the Tower, and then rode through Tower-street, where he was received by Sergeant Vawce, Lord of Misrule to John Mainard, one of the sheriffs of London, and so conducted through the city, with a great company of young lords and gentlemen, to the house of Sir George Barne, Lord Mayor, where he, with the chief of his company, dined, and after had a great banquet, and at his departure the Lord Mayor gave him a standing cup with a cover of silver and gilt, of the value of ten pound, for a reward, and also set a hogshead of wine and a barrel of beer at his gate for his train that followed him. The residue of his gentlemen and servants dined at other aldermen's houses and with the sheriffs, and so departed to the Tower-wharf again, and to the Court by water, to the great commendation of the mayor and aldermen, and highly accepted of the king and council."

Chancellor that then was;\* nevertheless, through the means of my lord Stafford,† the first part was licensed, and imprinted the first year of the reign of this our most noble and virtuous Queen, and dedicated then to your honours with this preface. Since which time, although I have been called to another trade of life, yet my good Lord Stafford hath not ceased to call upon me to publish so much as I had gotten at other men's hands; so that, through his lordship's earnest means, I have now set forth another part, containing as little of mine own as the first part doth of other men's." The Mirror for Magistrates immediately acquired and for a considerable time retained great popularity; a third edition of it was published in 1571; a fourth, with the addition of a series of new lives from the fabulous history of the early Britons, by John Higgins, in 1574; a fifth, in 1587; a sixth, with further additions in 1610, by Richard Nichols, assisted by Thomas Blenerhasset (whose contributions, however, had been separately printed in 1578).‡ The copiousness of the plan, into which any narrative might be inserted belonging to either the historical or legendary part of the national annals, and that without any trouble in the way of connexion or adaptation, had made the work a receptacle for the contributions of all the ready versifiers of the day—a common, or parish green, as it were, on which a fair was held to which any one who chose might bring his wares—or rather a sort of continually growing

\* He is supposed to mean Dr. Heath, Archbishop of York.

† Henry Lord Stafford, son and heir of Edward, last Duke of Buckingham.

‡ A reprint of the Mirror for Magistrates, in 2 (sometimes divided into 3) vols. 4to., was brought out by the late Mr. Hazlewood in 1815.

monument, or *cairn*, to which every man added his stone, or little separate specimen of brick and mortar, who conceived himself to have any skill in building the lofty rhyme. There were scarcely any limits to the size to which the book might have grown, except the mutability of the public taste, which will permit no one thing, good or bad, to go on for ever. 'The Mirror for Magistrates, however, for all its many authors, is of note in the history of our poetry for very little else which it contains, except the portions contributed by its contriver Sackville, consisting only of one legend, that of Henry, Duke of Buckingham (Richard the Third's famous accomplice and victim), and the introduction, or Induction, as it is called, prefixed to that narrative, which however appears to have been originally intended to stand at the head of the whole work. The induction begins with a picture of winter, which is drawn with vivid colours and a powerful pencil; then follow some brief reflections, suggested by the faded fields and scattered summer flowers, on the instability of all things here below; but suddenly the poet perceives that the night is drawing on faster, and thereupon redoubles his pace; when, he continues,

In black all clad there fell before my face  
A piteous wight, whom woe had all forwast;  
Furth from her eyen the crystal tears outbrast,  
And, sighing sore, her hands she wrong and fold,  
Tearing her hair that ruth was to behold.

Her body small, forwithered and forspent,  
As is the stalk with summer's drought opprest;  
Her wealked face with woful tears besprent,  
Her colour pale, and, as it seemd her best,  
In woe and plaint repos'd was her rest;  
And, as the stone that drops of water wears,  
So dented were her cheeks with fall of tears.

I stood aghast, beholding all her plight,  
 Tween dread and dolour so distraimed in heart,  
 That, while my knees upstarted with the sight,  
 The tears outstreamed for sorrow of her smart.  
 But, when I saw no end that could apart  
 The deadly dole which she so sore did make,  
 With doleful voice then thus to her I spake :

Unwrap thy woes, whatever wight thou be !  
 And stint betime to spill thyself with plaint :  
 Tell what thou art, and whence ; for well I see  
 Thou can'st not dure, with sorrow thus attaint.  
 And with that word, of sorrow, all forfaint,  
 She looked up, and, prostrate as she lay,  
 With piteous sound, lo ! thus she gan to say :

Alas, I, wretch, whom thus thou see'st distraimed,  
 With wasting woes that never shall aslake,  
 SORROW I am ; in endless torments pained  
 Among the Furies in the infernal lake ;  
 Where Pluto, God of Hell, so grisly blake,  
 Doth hold his throne, and Lethe's deadly taste  
 Doth reave remembrance of each thing forepast.

Whence come I am, the dreary destiny  
 And luckless lot for to bemoan of those  
 Whom fortune in this maze of misery  
 Of wretched chance most woeful mirrors chose ;  
 That when thou seest how lightly they did lose  
 Their pomp, their power, and that they thought most sure,  
 Thou may'st soon deem no earthly joy may dure.

Sorrow conducts the poet to the region of departed spirits ; and then follows a long succession of allegoric pictures—including Remorse, Dread (or Fear), Revenge, Misery (that is, Avarice), Care, Sleep, Old Age, Ma-lady, Famine, Death, War, Debate (or Strife), &c. ; all drawn with extraordinary strength of imagination, and with a command of expressive, picturesque, and melodious language, nothing equal or approaching to which had till now been seen in our poetry, except only in

Chaucer—and he can scarcely be said to have written in the same English the capabilities of which were thus brought out by Sackville. Both for his poetical genius, and in the history of the language, Sackville and his two poems in the Mirror for Magistrates—more especially this Induction—must be considered as forming the connecting link or bridge between Chaucer and Spenser, between the Canterbury Tales and the Fairy Queen.

For the sake of affording a means of comparison with the style and manner of the extracts we shall presently have to give from the latter work, we will add here another of Sackville's delineations :—

And, next in order, sad OLD AGE we found,  
 His beard all hoar, his eyes hollow and blind,  
 With drooping cheer still poring on the ground,  
 As on the place where nature him assigned  
 To rest, when that the Sisters had untwined  
 His vital thread, and ended with their knife  
 The fleeting course of fast-declining life.

There heard we him, with broke and hollow plaint,  
 Rue with himself his end approaching fast,  
 And all for nought his wretched mind torment  
 With sweet remembrance of his pleasures past,  
 And fresh delights of lusty youth forewaste ;  
 Recounting which how would he sob and shriek,  
 And to be young again of Jove beseech !

But, an<sup>b</sup> the cruel fates so fix'd be  
 That time forepast cannot return again,  
 This one request of Jove yet pray'd he—  
 That, in such withered plight and wretched pain  
 As eld, accompanied with her loathsome train,  
 Had brought on him, all were it woe and grief,  
 He might awhile yet linger forth his lief,

\* Utterly wasted and gone.

• If.

And not so soon descend into the pit,  
 Where Death, when he the mortal corpse hath slain,  
 With reckless hand in grave doth cover it,  
 Thereafter never to enjoy again  
 The gladsome light, but, in the ground ylain,  
 In depth of darkness waste and wear to nought,  
 As he had ne'er into the world been brought.

But who had seen him sobbing how he stood  
 Unto himself, and how he would bemoan  
 His youth forepast,—as though it wrought him good  
 To talk of youth, all were his youth foregone—  
 He would have inused, and marvelled much, whercon  
 This wretched Age should life desire so fain,  
 And knows full well life doth but length his pain.

Crook-backed he was, tooth-shaken, and blear-eyed,  
 Went on three feet, and sometime crept on four ;  
 With old lame bones, that rattled by his side ;  
 His scalp all piled,<sup>c</sup> and he with eld forelore ;  
 His withered fist still knocking at death's door ;  
 Fumbling and drivelling as he draws his breath ;  
 For brief, the shape and messenger of Death.

Nothing is wanting to Sackville that belongs to force either of conception or of expression. In his own world of the sombre and sad, also, he is almost as great an inventor as he is a colourist ; and Spenser has been indebted to him for many hints, as well as for example and inspiration in a general sense : what most marks the immaturity of his style is a certain operose and constrained air, a stiffness and hardness of manner, like what we find in the works of the earliest school of the Italian painters, before Raphael and Michael Angelo arose to convert the art from a painful repetition or mimicry of reality into a process of creation—from the timid slave of nature into her glorified rival. Of the flow and variety, the genuine

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<sup>c</sup> Peeled, bare, bald.

spirit of light and life, that we have in Spenser and Shakspeare, there is little in Sackville ; his poetry—ponderous, gloomy, and monotonous—is still oppressed by the shadows of night ; and we see that, although the darkness is retiring, the sun has not yet risen.

## ORIGIN OF THE REGULAR DRAMA.

From the first introduction of dramatic representations in England, probably as early as the beginning of the twelfth century, down to the beginning of the fifteenth, or perhaps somewhat later, the only species of drama known was that styled the *Miracle*, or *Miracle-play*. The subjects of the miracle-plays were all taken from the histories of the Old and New Testament, or from the legends of saints and martyrs ; and, indeed, it is probable that their original design was chiefly to instruct the people in religious knowledge. They were often acted as well as written by clergymen, and were exhibited in abbeys, in churches, and in churchyards, on Sundays or other holidays. It appears to have been not till some time after their first introduction that miracle-plays came to be annually represented under the direction and at the expense of the guilds or trading companies of towns, as at Chester and elsewhere. The characters, or *dramatis personæ*, of the miracle-plays, though sometimes supernatural or legendary, were always actual personages, historical or imaginary ; and in that respect these primitive plays approached nearer to the regular drama than those by which they were succeeded—the *Morals*, or *Moral-plays*, in which not a history, but an *apologue* was represented, and in which the characters were all allegorical.

W.H.J.  
Portsea  
Nov. 1. 70

The moral-plays are traced back to the early part of the reign of Henry VI., and they appear to have gradually arisen out of the miracle-plays, in which, of course, characters very nearly approaching in their nature to the impersonated vices and virtues of the new species of drama must have occasionally appeared. The Devil of the Miracles, for example, would very naturally suggest the Vice of the Morals ; which latter, however, it is to be observed, also retained the Devil of their predecessors, who was too amusing and popular a character to be discarded. Nor did the moral-plays altogether put down the miracle-plays : in many of the provincial towns, at least, the latter continued to be represented almost to as late a date as the former. Finally, by a process of natural transition very similar to that by which the sacred and supernatural characters of the religious drama had been converted into the allegorical personifications of the moral-plays, these last, gradually becoming less and less vague and shadowy, at length, about the middle of the sixteenth century, boldly assumed life and reality, giving birth to the first examples of regular tragedy and comedy.

Both moral-plays, however, and even the more ancient miracle-plays, continued to be occasionally performed down to the very end of the sixteenth century. One of the last dramatic representations at which Elizabeth was present, was a moral-play, entitled 'The Contention between Liberality and Prodigality,' which was performed before her majesty in 1600, or 1601. This production was printed in 1602, and was probably written not long before that time : it has been said to be the joint production of Thomas Lodge and Robert Greene,\* the last of

\* By Edward Phillips, in his 'Theatrum Poetarum,' 1675.

whom died in 1592. The only three manuscripts of the Chester miracle-plays now extant were written in 1600, 1604, and 1607, most probably while the plays still continued to be acted. There is evidence that the ancient annual miracle-plays were acted at Tewkesbury at least till 1585, at Coventry till 1591, at Newcastle till 1598, and at Kendal down even to the year 1603.\*

As has been observed, however, by Mr. Collier, the latest and best historian of the English drama, the moral-plays were enabled to keep possession of the stage so long as they did, partly by means of the approaches they had for some time been making to a more improved species of composition, "and partly because, under the form of allegorical fiction and abstract character, the writers introduced matter which covertly touched upon public events, popular prejudices, and temporary opinions."† He mentions, in particular, the moral entitled 'The Three Ladies of London,' printed in 1584, and its continuation, 'The Three Lords and Three Ladies of London,' which appeared in 1590 (both by R. W.), as belonging to this class.

\* The 'Towneley Mysteries' (so called after the MS. containing them, belonging to Mr. P. Towneley), which are supposed to have been acted at Widkirk Abbey in Yorkshire, have been printed for the Surtees Society, under the care of the Rev. Joseph Hunter and J. Stevenson, Esq., 8vo. Newcastle, 1831; the 'Coventry Mysteries,' under the care of J. O. Halliwell, Esq., for the Shakespeare Society, 8vo. London, 1841; and the 'Chester Mysteries,' for the same Society, under the care of Thomas Wright, Esq., vol. i. 8vo. London, 1843.

† *Hist. of Dramatic Poetry*, ii. 413.

## INTERLUDES OF JOHN HEYWOOD.

Meanwhile, long before the earliest of these dates, the ancient drama had, in other hands, assumed wholly a new form. Mr. Collier appears to consider the interludes of John Heywood, the earliest of which must have been written before 1521, as first exhibiting the moral-play in a state of transition to the regular tragedy and comedy. "John Heywood's dramatic productions," he says, "almost form a class by themselves: they are neither miracle-plays nor moral-plays, but what may be properly and strictly called interludes, a species of writing of which he has a claim to be considered the inventor, although the term interlude was applied generally to theatrical productions in the reign of Edward IV." A notion of the nature of these compositions may be collected from the plot of one of them, 'A Mery Play betwene the Pardoner and the Frere, the Curate and neighbour Pratte,' printed in 1533, of which Mr. Collier gives the following account:—"A pardoner and a friar have each obtained leave of the curate to use his church,—the one for the exhibition of his relics, and the other for the delivery of a sermon—the object of both being the same, that of procuring money. The friar arrives first, and is about to commence his discourse, when the pardoner enters and disturbs him; each is desirous of being heard, and, after many vain attempts by force of lungs, they proceed to force of arms, kicking and cuffing each other unmercifully. The curate, called by the disturbance in his church, endeavours, without avail, to part the combatants; he the fore calls in neighbour Pratte to his assistance, and, while the curate seizes the friar, Pratte

undertakes to deal with the pardoner, in order that they may set them in the stocks. It turns out that both the friar and the pardoner are too much for their assailants; and the latter, after a sound drubbing, are glad to come to a composition, by which the former are allowed quietly to depart."\* Here, then, we have a dramatic fable, or incident at least, conducted not by allegorical personifications, but by characters of real life, which is the essential difference that distinguishes the true tragedy or comedy from the mere moral. Heywood's interludes, however, of which there are two or three more of the same description with this (besides others partaking more of the allegorical character), are all only single acts, or, more properly, scenes, and exhibit, therefore, nothing more than the mere rudiments or embryo of the regular comedy.

## UDALL'S RALPH ROISTER DOISTER.

The earliest English comedy, properly so called, that has yet been discovered, is commonly considered to be that of Ralph Roister Doister, the production of Nicholas Udall, an eminent classical scholar in the earlier part of the sixteenth century, and one of the masters, first at Eton, and afterwards at Westminster. Its existence was unknown till a copy was discovered in 1818, which was perhaps not printed earlier than 1566 (for the title-page was gone); but the play is mentioned in Thomas Wilson's 'Rule of Reason,' first printed in 1551, and other considerations make it probable that it may have been written some fifteen or twenty years before.†

\* Hist. of Dramatic Poetry, ii. 386.

† See Collier, ii. 446.

This hypothesis would carry it back to about the same date with the earliest of Heywood's interludes; and it certainly was produced while that writer was still alive and in the height of his popularity. It may be observed that Wilson calls Udall's play an interlude, which would therefore seem to have been at this time the common name for any dramatic composition, as, indeed, it appears to have been for nearly a century preceding. The author himself, however, in his prologue, announces it as a "Comedy, or Interlude," and as an imitation of the classical models of Plautus and Terence.

And, in truth, both in character and in plot, *Ralph Roister Doister* has every right to be regarded as a true comedy, showing, indeed, in its execution, the rudeness of the age, but in its plan, and in reference to the principle upon which it is constructed, as regular and as complete as any comedy in the language. It is divided into acts and scenes, which very few of the moral-plays are; and, according to Mr. Collier's estimate, the performance could not have been concluded in less time than about two hours and a half, while few of the morals would require more than about an hour for their representation.\* The *dramatis personæ* are thirteen in all, nine male and four female; and the two principal ones at least—Ralph himself, a vain, thoughtless, blustering fellow, whose ultimately baffled pursuit of the gay and rich widow Custance forms the action of the piece; and his servant, Matthew Merrygreek, a kind of flesh-and-blood representative of the Vice of the old moral-plays—are strongly discriminated, and drawn altogether with much force and spirit. The story is not very ingeniously involved, but

\* See Collier, ii. 45.

it moves forward through its gradual development, and onwards to the catastrophe, in a sufficiently bustling, lively manner ; and some of the situations, though the humour is rather farcical than comic, are very cleverly conceived and managed. The language also may be said to be, on the whole, racy and characteristic, if not very polished. A few lines from a speech of one of the widow's handmaidens, Tibet Talkapace, in a conversation with her fellow-servants on the approaching marriage of their masters, may be quoted as a specimen :—

“ I hearde our nourse speake of an husband to-day  
Ready for our mistresse, a rich man and a gay :  
And we shall go in our Frenche hoodes every day,  
In our silke cassocks (I warrant you) freshe and gay ;  
In our tricke ferdigews and billiments of golde,  
Brave in our sutes of chaunge seven double folde.  
Then shall ye see Tibet, sires, treade the mosse so triname ;  
Nay, why sayd I treade ? ye shall see her glide and  
swimme,  
Not lumperdee, clumperdee, like our Spaniel Rig.”

## GAMMER GURTON'S NEEDLE.

Ralph Roister Doister is in every way a very superior production to Gammer Gurton's Needle, which, before the discovery of Udall's piece, had the credit of being the first regular English comedy. At the same time it must be admitted that the superior antiquity assigned to Ralph Roister Doister is not very conclusively made out. All that we know with certainty with regard to the date of the play is, that it was in existence in 1551. The oldest edition of Gammer Gurton's Needle is dated 1575 : but how long the play may have been composed before that year is uncertain. The title-page of the 1575 edition describes it as “ played on the stage not long ago in

Christ's College in Cambridge ;" and Warton, on the authority of a manuscript memorandum by Oldys, the eminent antiquary of the early part of the last century, says that it was written and first printed in 1551.\* Wright also, in his *Historia Histrionica*, first printed in 1699, states it as his opinion that it was written in the reign of Edward VI. In refutation of all this it is alleged that " it could not have been produced so early, because John Still (afterwards bishop of Bath and Wells), the author of it, was not born until 1543 ; and, consequently, in 1552, taking Warton's latest date, would only have been nine years old.† But the evidence that Bishop Still was the author of *Gammer Gurton's Needle* is exceedingly slight. The play is merely stated on the title-page to have been " made by Mr. S., Master of Arts ;" and even if there was, as is asserted, no other master of arts of Christ's College whose name began with S. at the time when this title-page was printed, the author of the play is not stated to have been of that college, nor, if he were, is it necessary to assume that he was living in 1575. On the whole, therefore, while

\* 'History of English Poetry,' iv. 32. He adds, that it was "soon afterwards acted at Christ's College in Cambridge." And elsewhere (iii. 205) he says, that it was acted in that society about the year 1552. We do not understand how Mr. Collier (ii. 444) collects from a comparison of these two passages that "Warton states in one place that 'Gammer Gurton's Needle' was printed in 1551, and in another that it was not written till 1552." Mr. Collier, it may be perceived, is also mistaken in adding, that Warton seems to have had no other evidence for these assertions than the opinion of Wright, the author of the 'Historia Histrionica.'

† Collier, ii. 444.

there is no proof that Ralph Roister Doister is older than the year 1551, it is by no means certain that Gammer Gurton's Needle was not written in that same year.

This "right pithy, pleasant, and merie comedie," as it is designated on the title-page, is, like Udall's play, regularly divided into acts and scenes, and, like it too, is written in rhyme—the language and versification being, on the whole, perhaps rather more easy and flowing—a circumstance which, more than any external evidence that has been produced, would incline us to assign it to a somewhat later date. But it is in all respects a very tame and poor performance—the plot, if so it can be called, meagre to insipidity and silliness, the characters only a few slightly distinguished varieties of the lowest life, and the dialogue in general as feeble and undramatic as the merest monotony can make it. Its merriment is of the coarsest and most boisterous description, even where it is not otherwise offensive; but the principal ornament wherewith the author endeavours to enliven his style is a brutal filth and grossness of expression, which is the more astounding when we consider that the piece was the production, in all probability, of a clergyman at least, if not of one who afterwards became a bishop, and that it was certainly represented before a learned and grave university. There is nothing of the same high seasoning in Ralph Roister Doister, though that play seems to have been intended only for the amusement of a common London audience. The Second Act of Gammer Gurton's Needle is introduced by a song,

I cannot eat but little meat,  
My stomach is not good, &c.

which is the best thing in the whole play, and which is

well known from having been quoted by Warton, who describes it as the earliest *chanson à boire*, or drinking ballad, of any merit in the language; and observes that "it has a vein of ease and humour which we should not expect to have been inspired by the simple beverage of those times." But this song is most probably not by the author of the play: it appears to be merely a portion of a popular song of the time, which is found elsewhere complete, and has recently been so printed, from a MS. of the sixteenth century, by Mr. Dyce, in his edition of Skelton.\* We shall give, as a specimen of the language of Gammer Gurton's Needle, the following introductory speech to the First Act, which is put into the mouth of a character called Diccon the Bedlam,—that is, one of those mendicants who affected a sort of half-madness, and were known by the name of Bedlam Beggars:—†

"Many a myle have I walked, divers and sundry waies,  
 And many a good man's house have I bin at in my dais:  
 Many a gossip's cup in my tyme have I tasted,  
 And many a broche and spyt have I both turned and  
 basted:  
 Many a peece of bacon have I had out of thir. balkes,  
 In ronnyng over the countrey with long and were walkes;

\* See 'Account of Skelton and his Writings,' vol. i. pp. 7-9. Mr. Dyce states that the MS. from which he has printed the song is certainly of an earlier date than the oldest known edition of the play (1575).

† Diccon is the ancient abbreviation of Richard. It may be noticed that there is an entry in the Stationers' Books of a play entitled *Diccon of Bedlam*, under the year 1563, which is in all probability the same piece we are now considering. If so, this fact affords an additional presumption that Gammer Gurton's -Needle was printed, or at least written, some years before the date of the earliest edition of it now extant.

Yet came my foote never within those doore cheekeſ,  
To ſeek fleſh or fyſh, garlyke, onyons, or leekes,  
That ever I ſaw a ſorte in ſuch a plyght,  
As here within this house appeareth to my ſyght.  
There is howlynge and ſchowlyng, all caſt in a dampē,  
With whewling and pewling, as though they had loſt a  
trump :

Syghing and ſobbing, they weepe and they wayle ;  
I marvel in my mynd what the devil they ayle.  
The olde trot ſyts groning, with alas and alas,  
And Tib wringes her hands, and takes on in worse caſe ;  
With poore Cocke, theyr boye, they be dryven in ſuch fyts  
I feare mee the folkeſ be not well in theyr wyts.  
Aske them what they ayle, or who brought them in this  
ſtaye ?

They aunſwer not at all, but alacke and welaway !  
When I ſaw it booted not, out at doores I hyed mee,  
And caught a ſlyp of bacon, when I ſaw none ſpyed mee,  
Which I intend not far hence, unles my purpose fayle,  
Shall ſerve for a ſhoing horne to draw on two pots of ale."

## MISOGONUS.

Probably of earlier date than Gammer Gurton's Needle is another example of the regular drama, which, like Ralph Roister Doister, has been but lately recovered, a play entitled Misogonus, the only copy of which is in manuscript, and is dated 1577. An allusion, however, in the course of the dialogue would seem to prove that the play must have been composed about the year 1560. To the prologue is appended the name of Thomas Rychardes, who has therefore been assumed to be the author. The play, as contained in the manuscript, consists only of the unusual number of four acts, but the story, nevertheless, appears to be completed. For a further account of Misogonus we must refer the reader to Mr. Collier's very elaborate analysis;\* only

\* Hist. Dram. Poet., ii. 463-481.

remarking that the piece is written throughout in rhyming quatrains, not couplets, and that the language would indicate it to be of about the same date with *Gammer Gurton's Needle*. It contains a song, which for fluency and spirit may very well bear to be compared with the drinking-song in that drama. Neither in the contrivance and conduct of the plot, however, nor in the force with which the characters are exhibited, does it evince the same free and skilful hand with *Ralph Roister Doister*, although it is interesting for some of the illustrations which it affords of the manners of the time. One of the *dramatis personæ*, in particular, who is seldom absent from the stage, *Cacurgus*, the buffoon or fool kept by the family whose fortunes form the subject of the piece, must, as Mr. Collier remarks, "have been a very amusing character in his double capacity of rustic simpleton and artful mischief-maker." "There are few pieces," Mr. Collier adds, "in the whole range of our ancient drama which display the important character of the domestic fool in anything like so full and clear a light."

#### CHRONICLE HISTORIES.—BALE'S KYNGE JOHAN, ETC.

If the regular drama thus made its first appearance among us in the form of comedy, the tragic muse was at least not far behind. There is some ground for supposing, indeed, that one species of the graver drama of real life may have begun to emerge rather sooner than comedy out of the shadowy world of the old allegorical representations; that, namely, which was long distinguished from both comedy and tragedy by the name

of History; or Chronicle History, consisting, to adopt Mr. Collier's definition, "of certain passages or events detailed by annalists put into a dramatic form, often without regard to the course in which they happened; the author sacrificing chronology, situation, and circumstance to the superior object of producing an attractive play."\* Of what may be called at least the transition from the moral-play to the history, we have an example in Bale's lately recovered drama of 'Kynge Johan,'† written in all probability some years before the middle of the sixteenth century, in which, while many of the characters are still allegorical abstractions, others are real personages; King John himself, Pope Innocent, Cardinal Pandulphus, Stephen Langton, and other historical figures moving about in odd intermixture with such mere notional spectres as the Widowed Britannia, Imperial Majesty, Nobility, Clergy, Civil Order, Treason, Verity, and Sedition. The play is accordingly described by Mr. Collier, the editor, as occupying an intermediate place between moralities and historical plays; and "it is," he adds, "the only known existing specimen of that species of composition of so early a date." The other productions that are extant of the same mixed character are all of the latter half of the century; such as that entitled *Tom Tiler and his Wife*, supposed to have been first printed about 1578, although the oldest known edition is a reprint dated 1661; *The Conflict of Conscience* (called a comedy), by Nathaniel Woods, minister of Norwich, 1581, &c.‡

\* *Hist. Dram. Poet.*, ii. p. 414.

† Published by the Camden Society, 4to. 1838, under the care of Mr. Collier.

‡ See an account of these and other pieces of the same kind in *Collier, Hist. Dram. Poet.*, ii. 353, &c. In assign-

## TRAGEDY OF GORBODUC.—BLANK VERSE.

But the era of genuine tragedies and historical plays had already commenced some years before these last-mentioned pieces saw the light. On the 18th of January, 1562, was "shown before the Queen's most Excellent Majesty," as the title-page of the printed play informs us, "in her Highness' Court of Whitehall, by the Gentlemen of the Inner Temple," the Tragedy of Gorboduc, otherwise entitled the Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex, the production of the same Thomas Sackville who has already engaged our attention as by far the most remarkable writer in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, and of Thomas Norton, who is said to have been a puritan clergyman, and who had already acquired a poetic reputation, though in a different province of the land of song, as one of the coadjutors of Sternhold and Hopkins in their metrical version of the Psalms. On the title-page of the first edition, printed in 1565, which however was surreptitious, it is stated that the three first acts were written by Norton and the two last by Sackville; and, although this announcement was afterwards withdrawn, it was never expressly contradicted, and it is not improbable that it may have a general foundation of truth. It must be confessed, however, that no change of style gives any indi-

ing the first publication of *Tom Tiler and his Wife* to the year 1578, Mr. Collier professes to follow Ritson (*Ancient Songs*, ii. 31, edit. 1829), who, he observes, was no doubt as correct as usual. But, whatever may have been Ritson's correctness in matters of mere transcription, it is proper to note that in the present case he merely offers a conjecture; so that we are left to depend, not upon his correctness, but upon his sagacity. That very little dependence is to be placed upon that, they will feel most who know Ritson best.

cation which it is easy to detect of a succession of hands ; and that, judging by this criterion, we should rather be led to infer that, in whatever way the two writers contrived to combine their labours, whether by the one retouching and improving what the other had roughly sketched, or by the one taking the quieter and humbler, the other the more impassioned, scenes or portions of the dialogue, they pursued the same method throughout the piece. Charles Lamb expresses himself “willing to believe that Lord Buckhurst supplied the more vital parts.” \* At the same time he observes that “the style of this old play is stiff and cumbersome, like the dresses of its times ;” and that, though there may be flesh and blood underneath, we cannot get at it. In truth, Gorboduc is a drama only in form. In spirit and manner it is wholly undramatic. The story has no dramatic capabilities, no evolution either of action or of character, although it affords some opportunities for description and eloquent declamation ; and neither was there aught of dramatic power about the genius of Sackville (to whom we may safely attribute whatever is most meritorious in the composition), any more than there was about that of his follower Spenser, illustrious as the latter stands in the front line of the poets of his country and of the world. Gorboduc, accordingly, is a most unaffected and uninteresting tragedy ; as would also be the noblest book of the Fairy Queen, or of Paradise Lost—the portion of either poem that soars the highest—if it were to be attempted to be transformed into a drama by merely being divided into acts and scenes, and cut up into the outward semblance of dialogue. In whatever abundance

\* Specimens of Eng. Dram. Poets, i. 6 (edit. of 1835).

all else of poetry might be outpoured, the spirit of dialogue and of dramatic action would not be there. *Gorboduc*, however, though a dull play, is in some other respects a remarkable production for the time. The language is not dramatic, but it is throughout singularly correct, easy, and perspicuous; in many parts it is even elevated and poetical; and there are some passages of strong painting not unworthy of the hand to which we owe the *Induction to the Legend of the Duke of Buckingham in the Mirror for Magistrates*. The piece has accordingly won much applause in quarters where there was little feeling of the true spirit of dramatic writing as the exposition of passion in action, and where the chief thing demanded in a tragedy was a certain orderly pomp of expression, and monotonous respectability of sentiment, to fill the ear, and tranquillize rather than excite and disturb the mind. Sir Philip Sidney, while he finds fault with *Gorboduc* for its violation of the unities of time and place, declares it to be “full of stately speeches and well-sounding phrases, climbing to the height of Seneca in his style, and as full of notable morality, which it doth most delightfully teach, and so obtain the very end of poesy.” It grieves him, he adds, that it is so “very defectuous in the circumstances,”—that is, the unities,—because that must prevent it from remaining for ever “as an exact model of all tragedies.”\* Rymer terms it “a fable better turned for tragedy than any on this side the Alps;” and affirms that “it might have been a better direction to Shakspeare and Ben Jonson than any guide they have had the luck to follow.”† Pope has delivered

\* *Defence of Poesy*, p. 84 (edit. of 1810).

† *Short View of Tragedy*, p. 84.

his opinion to the like effect, telling us that “ the writers of the succeeding age might have improved by copying from this drama a propriety in the sentiments and dignity in the sentences, and an unaffected perspicuity of style, which are essential to tragedy.” One peculiarity of the more ancient national drama retained in Gorboduc is the introduction, before every act, of a piece of machinery called the Dumb Show, in which was shadowed forth, by a sort of allegorical exhibition, the part of the story that was immediately to follow. This custom survived on the English stage down to a considerably later date: the reader may remember that Shakspeare, though he rejected it in his own dramas, has introduced the play acted before the King and Queen in Hamlet by such a prefigurative dumb show.

Another expedient, which Shakspeare has also on two occasions made use of, namely, the assistance of a chorus, is also adopted in Gorboduc; but rather by way of mere decoration, and to keep the stage from being at any time empty, as in the old Greek drama, than to carry forward or even to explain the action, as in Henry the Fifth and Pericles. It consists, to quote the description given by Warton, “ of Four Ancient and Sage Men of Britain, who regularly close every act, the last excepted, with an ode in long-lined stanzas, drawing back the attention of the audience to the substance of what has just passed, and illustrating it by recapitulatory moral reflections and poetical or historical allusions.”\* These effusions of the chorus are all in rhyme, as being intended to be of the same lyrical character with those in the Greek plays; but the dialogue in the rest of the piece is in blank verse,

\* Hist. Eng. Poet. iv. 181.

of the employment of which in dramatic composition it affords the earliest instance in the language. The first experiment in this “strange metre,” as it was then called, had been made only a few years before by Lord Surrey, in his translation of the Second and Fourth Books of the *Æneid*, which was published in 1557, but must have been written more than ten years before, Surrey having been put to death in January, 1547. In the mean time the new species of verse had been cultivated in several original compositions by Nicholas Grimoald, from whom, in the opinion of Warton, the rude model exhibited by Surrey received “new strength, elegance, and modulation.”\* Grimoald’s pieces in blank verse were first printed in 1557, along with Surrey’s translation, in Tottel’s collection entitled ‘Songs and Sonnets of Uncertain Authors;’ and we are not aware that there was any more English blank verse written or given to the world till the production of *Gorboduc*. In that case Sackville would stand as our third writer in this species of verse; in the use of which, also, he may be admitted to have surpassed Grimoald fully as much as the latter improved upon Surrey. Indeed, it may be said to have been *Gorboduc* that really established blank verse in the language; for its employment from the time of the appearance of that tragedy became common in dramatic composition, while in other kinds of poetry, notwithstanding two or three early attempts, such as Gascoigne’s ‘Steel Glass,’ in 1576, Aske’s ‘Elizabetha Triumphans,’ in 1588, and Vallans’s ‘Tale of Two Swans,’ in 1590, it never made head against rhyme, nor acquired any popularity, till it was brought into repute

\* Hist. Eng. Poet. iii. 346.

by the *Paradise Lost*, published a full century after Sackville's play. It is remarkable that blank verse is never mentioned or alluded to by Sir Philip Sidney in his *Defence of Poetry*, which could not have been written more than a few years before 1586, the date of Sidney's death, at the age of thirty-two. Yet he was acquainted with *Gorboduc*, as it appears; and in one part of his tract he treats expressly on the subject of versification, of which, he says, "there are two sorts—the one ancient, the other modern: the ancient marked the quantity of each syllable, and, according to that, framed his verse; the modern observing only number, with some regard to the accent, the chief life of it standeth in that like sounding of the words which we call rhyme."\* Even in dramatic composition the use of blank verse appears to have been for some time confined to pieces not intended for popular representation. *Gorboduc*, as we have seen, was brought out before the Queen at Whitehall; and although, after that example, Mr. Collier observes, "blank verse was not unfrequently employed in performances written expressly for the court and for representation before select audiences, many years elapsed before this heroic measure without rhyme was adopted on the public stages of London."†

## OTHER EARLY DRAMAS.

Within a fortnight after the first performance of *Gorboduc*, it is recorded that another historical play, entitled *Julius Cæsar*, was acted at court; but of this piece—affording "the earliest instance on record," Mr. Collier

\* *Def. of Poesy*, p. 98.

† *Hist. Dram. Poet.* ii. 435.

apprehends, “in which events from the Roman history were dramatised in English”\*—nothing is known beyond the name. To about the same time, or it may be even a year or two earlier, is probably to be assigned another early drama, founded on the story of Romeo and Juliet; as is inferred from the assertion of Arthur Brooke, in an advertisement prefixed to his poem upon that subject printed in 1562, that he had seen “the same argument lately set forth on the stage.” But whether this was a regular tragedy, or only a moral-play, we have no data for conjecturing. “From about this date,” says Mr. Collier, “until shortly after the year 1570, the field, as far as we have the means of judging, seems to have been pretty equally divided between the later morals, and the earlier attempts in tragedy, comedy, and history. In some pieces of this date (as well as subsequently) we see endeavours made to reconcile or combine the two different modes of writing; but morals afterwards generally gave way, and yielded the victory to a more popular and more intelligible species of performance. The licence to James Burbage and others in 1574 mentions comedies, tragedies, interludes, and stage plays; and in the act of common council against their performance in the city, in the following year, theatrical performances are designated as interludes, tragedies, comedies, and shows; including much more than the old miracle-plays, or more recent moral-plays, which would be embraced by the words interludes, shows, and even stage-plays, but to which the terms tragedies and comedies, found in both instruments, could not be so properly

\* *Hist. Dram. Poet.* ii. 415.

applicable." \* We may add, in order to finish the subject here, that in the licence granted by James I., in 1603, to Burbage, Shakspeare, and their associates, they are authorized to play "comedies, tragedies, histories, interludes, morals, pastorals, stage-plays, and such other like;" and that exactly the same enumeration is found

\* Hist., ii. 417. Mr. Collier adds in a note, as an instance of how the names designating the different kinds of plays were still misapplied, or what vague notions were as yet attached to them, that, so late as in 1578, Thomas Lupton called his moral of *All for Money* both a tragedy and a comedy. He calls it in the title "a moral and pitiful comedy;" and in the prologue, "a pleasant tragedy;" but he seems, nevertheless, to use the words in their common acceptation—meaning by these quaint phrases that the piece is a mixture of tragedy and comedy. The catastrophe is sufficiently tragical; Judas, in the last scene, coming in, says the stage direction, "like a damned soul in black, painted with flames of fire and with a fearful vizard," followed by Dives, "with such like apparel as Judas hath;" while Damnation (another of the *dramatis personæ*), pursuing them, drives them before him, and they pass away, "making a pitiful noise," into perdition. A few years before, in like manner, Thomas Preston had called his play of *Cambyses, King of Persia*, which is a mixture of moral and history, "a lamentable tragedy full of pleasant mirth" on the title-page, and in the running title "A Comedie of King Cambises." Another play of about the same date, and of similar character, that of *Appius and Virginia*, by R. B., is styled "a tragical comedy." At a still earlier period, both in our own and in other languages, the terms tragedy and comedy were applied to other narrative compositions as well as to those in a dramatic form. The most illustrious instance of such a use of the term comedy is its employment by Dante for the title of his great poem, because—as he has himself expressly told us in his dedication of the *Paradise to Cane della Scala, Prince of Verona*—the story, although it began sadly, ended prosperously. Even the narratives in the *Mirror for Magistrates*, published, as we have seen, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, were still called tragedies.

in the patent granted to the Prince Palatine's players in 1612; in a new patent granted to Burbage's Company in 1620;\* and also in Charles I.'s patent to Hemings and Condell in 1625. *Morals*, properly so called, however, had disappeared from the stage long before this last date, though something of their peculiar character still survived in the pageant or masque. It may be observed that there is no mention of *morals*, any more than of *miracle-plays*, in the catalogue of the several species of dramatic entertainments which Shakespeare has put into the mouth of Polonius in *Hamlet*, and in which he seems to glance slyly at the almost equally extended string of distinctions in the royal patents.

Of the greater number of the plays that are recorded to have been produced in the first twenty years after the appearance of *Gorboduc*, only the names have been preserved, from which it cannot in all cases be certainly determined to what class the piece belonged. From the lists, extracted from the accounts of the Master of the Revels, of those represented before the court between 1568 and 1580, and which no doubt were mostly the same that were exhibited in the common playhouses, it appears probable that, out of fifty-two, about eighteen were founded upon subjects of ancient history or fable; twenty-one upon modern history, romances, and stories of a more general kind; and that, of the remainder, seven were comedies, and six *morals*.† “Of these fifty-

\* See it, printed for the first time, in Collier, i. 416.

† See the lists in Collier, iii. 24, 25. But compare the list given by Mr. P. Cunningham at the end of his ‘Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court in the Reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James I.’ printed for the Shakespeare Society. 8vo. Lond. 1842. Some items in Mr. Col-

two dramatic productions," Mr. Collier observes, "not one can be said to have survived, although there may be reason to believe that some of them formed the foundation of plays acted at a later period." Among the very few original plays of this period that have come down to us is one entitled *Damon and Pytheas*, which was acted before the queen at Christ Church, Oxford, in September, 1566, and was the production of Richard Edwards, who, in the general estimation of his contemporaries, seems to have been accounted the greatest dramatic genius of his day, at least in the comic style. His *Damon and Pytheas* does not justify their laudation to a modern taste; it is a mixture of comedy and tragedy, between which it would be hard to decide whether the grave writing or the gay is the rudest and dullest. The play is in rhyme, but some variety is produced by the measure or length of the line being occasionally changed. Mr. Collier thinks that the notoriety Edwards attained may probably have been in great part owing to the novelty of his subjects; *Damon and Pytheas* being one of the earliest attempts to bring stories from profane history upon the English stage. Edwards, however, besides his plays, wrote many other things in verse, some of which have an ease, and even an elegance, that neither Surrey himself nor any other writer of that age has excelled. Most of these shorter compositions are contained in the miscellany called the *Paradise of Dainty Devices*, which, indeed, is stated on the title-page to have been "devised and written for the most part" by

liер's classification may be questioned. For example, the story of *Titus and Gisippus* is not a "classical subject drawn from ancient history or fable."

Edwards, who had, however, been dead ten years when the first edition appeared in 1576. Among them are the very beautiful and tender lines, which have been often reprinted, in illustration of Terence's apophthegm,—

“ *Amantium iræ amoris redintegratio est;*”

or, as it is here rendered in the burthen of each stanza,—

“ The falling out of faithful friends renewing is of love.”

Edwards, who, towards the end of his life, was appointed one of the gentlemen of the Chapel Royal and master of the queen's singing-boys, “ united,” says Warton, “ all those arts and accomplishments which minister to popular pleasantry: he was the first fiddle, the most fashionable sonnetteer, the readiest rhymer, and the most facetious mimic, of the court.”\* Another surviving play produced during this interval is the Tragedy of Tancred and Gismund, founded upon Boccaccio's well-known story, which was presented before Elizabeth at the Inner Temple in 1568, the five acts of which it consists being severally written by five gentlemen of the society, of whom one, the author of the third act, was Christopher Hatton, afterwards the celebrated dancing lord chancellor. The play, however, was not printed till 1592, when Robert Wilmot, the writer of the fifth act, gave it to the world, as the title-page declares, “ newly revived, and polished according to the decorum of these days.” The meaning of this announcement, Mr. Collier conceives to be, that the piece was in the first instance composed in rhyme; but, rhymed plays having by the year 1592 gone out of fashion even on the public stage, Wilmot's reviving and polishing consisted

\* Hist. of Eng. Poet. iv. 110.

chiefly in cutting off many of the "tags to the lines," or turning them differently. The tragedy of Tancred and Gissund, which, like Gorboduc, has a dumb show at the commencement and a chorus at the close of every act, is, he observes, "the earliest English play extant the plot of which is known to be derived from an Italian novel."\* To this earliest stage in the history of the regular drama belong, finally, some plays translated or adapted from the ancient and from foreign languages, which doubtless also contributed to excite and give an impulse to the national taste and genius in this department. There is extant an old English printed version, in rhyme, of the *Andria* of Terence, which, although without date, is believed to have been published before 1590; and the moral, or interlude, called *Jack Juggler*, which is founded upon the *Amphitruo* of Plautus, appears from internal evidence to have been written in the reign of Edward VI. or Mary, though not printed till after the accession of Elizabeth. These early and very rude attempts were followed by a series of translations of the tragedies of Seneca, all likewise in rhyme, the first of which, the *Troas*, by Jasper Heywood, son of the celebrated John Heywood, was published in 1559; the second, the *Thyestes*, also by Heywood, in 1560; the third, the *Hercules Furens*, by the same hand, in 1561; the fourth, the *Œdipus*, by Alexander Nevyle, in 1563; the fifth and sixth, the *Medea* and the *Agamemnon*, by John Studley, in 1566. The *Octavia*, by Thomas Nuce, was entered on the Stationers' Books in the same year, but no copy of that date is now known to exist. Versions of the *Hyppolytus* and the *Hercules Octaens*

\* *Hist. Drama. Poet.* iii. 18.

by Studley, and of the *Thebais* by Thomas Newton, were added when the whole were republished together, in 1581, under the title of "Seneca his Ten Tragedies translated into English." Of the authors of these translations, Heywood and Studley in particular "have some claim," as Mr. Collier remarks, "to be viewed in the light of original dramatic poets; they added whole scenes and choruses wherever they thought them necessary." But Heywood and his coadjutors in this undertaking do not appear to have had any view of bringing Seneca upon the English stage; nor is it probable that any of their translated dramas were ever acted. In 1566, however, 'The Supposes,' a prose translation by George Gascoigne from *Gli Suppositi* of Ariosto, and another play, in blank verse, entitled 'Jocasta,' taken from the *Phœnissæ* of Euripides, by Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmarsh, were both represented at Gray's Inn. The Jocasta was, therefore, the second English play written in blank verse. "It is," says Warton, "partly a paraphrase and partly an abridgment of the Greek tragedy. There are many omissions, retrenchments, and transpositions. The chorus, the characters, and the substance of the story are entirely retained, and the tenor of the dialogue is often preserved through whole scenes. Some of the beautiful odes of the Greek chorus are neglected, and others substituted in their places, newly written by the translators."\* These substitutions, however, sometimes display considerable poetic talent; and the versification throughout the piece, both in the old metre (in which the choral passages are written) and in the new, flows with a facility and smoothness which, as

\* Hist. Eng. Poet. iv. 197.

contrasted with any English verse written twenty years before, marks a rate of progress during that space, in the subsidence of the language into comparative regularity of grammatical and syntactical forms, which is very surprising. Warton remarks, as a proof of the rapidity with which the work of refinement or change went on in the language at this time, that "in the second edition of this play, printed again with Gascoigne's poems in 1587, it was thought necessary to affix marginal explanations of many words, not long before in common use, but now become obsolete and unintelligible." In the present instance this was done, as the author tells us, at the request of a lady, who did not understand "poetical words or terms." But it was a practice occasionally followed down to a much later date. To all the quarto editions, for example, of Joshua Sylvester's metrical translation of Du Bartas (1605, 1608, 1613) there is appended "A brief Index, explaining most of the hardest words scattered through this whole work, for ease of such as are least exercised in those kind of readings." It consists of thirty double-columned pages, and may contain about six hundred words.\*

\* Most of these are proper names; many others are scientific terms. Among the explanations are the following:—*Annals*, Histories from year to year.—*Anchises' pheere*, Venus (*pheere* itself is not explained, and may therefore be supposed to have been still in common use.)—*Bacchanalian frows*, Women-priests of Bacchus, the God of Cups.—*Barr-geese* and *Barnacles*, a kind of fowls that grow of rotten trees and broken ships.—*Demain*, possessions of inheritance, time out of mind continued in the possession of the lord.—*Duel*, single combat.—*Metaphysical*, supernatural.—*Poetasters*, base, counterfeit, unlearned, witless, and wanton poets, that pester the world either with idle vanities or odious villanies.—*Patagons*,

SECOND STAGE OF THE REGULAR DRAMA : PEELE ;  
GREENE.

It thus appears that numerous pieces, entitled by their form to be accounted as belonging to the regular drama, had been produced before the year 1580 ; but nevertheless no dramatic work had yet been written which can be said to have taken its place in our literature, or to have almost any interest for succeeding generations on account of its intrinsic merits and apart from its mere antiquity. The next ten years disclose a new scene. Within that space a crowd of dramatists arose whose writings still form a portion of our living poetry, and present the regular drama, no longer only painfully struggling into the outward shape proper to that species of

Indian cannibals, such as eat man's flesh.—*Scaliger, Josephus*, now living, a Frenchman admirable in all languages for all manner of learning (so in edition of 1613, though *Scaliger* died in 1609). These explanatory vocabularies are sometimes, also, found appended to prose works of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Mr. Hallam, in a note to his *Introduction to the Literature of Europe*, vol. iii. p. 653, has observed that, in Pratt's edition of Bishop Hall's works, we have a glossary of obsolete or unusual words employed by him, which amount to more than 1100, some of which are Gallicisms, but the greater part of Latin or Greek origin. This book was published after the Restoration. By that time we see the difficulty ordinary readers had was, to understand the old words that were going out of fashion ; whereas, that of their ancestors, in the days of Elizabeth and James, was to understand the new words that were flowing so fast into their mother-tongue. This little circumstance is very curiously significant, not only of the opposite directions in which the language was moving at the two periods, but of the difference, also, in other respects, between an age of advancement and hope, and one of weariness, retrogression, and decrepitude.

composition, but having the breath of life breathed into it, and beginning to throb and stir with the pulsations of genuine passion. We can only here shortly notice some of the chief names in this numerous company of our early dramatists, properly so called. One to whom much attention has been recently directed is George Peele, the first of whose dramatic productions, 'The Arraignment of Paris,' a sort of masque or pageant which had been represented before the queen, was printed anonymously in 1584. But Peele's most celebrated drama is his 'Love of King David and Fair Bethsabe,' first published in 1599, two or three years after the author's death. This play Mr. Campbell has called "the earliest fountain of pathos and harmony that can be traced in our dramatic poetry;" and he adds, "there is no such sweetness of versification and imagery to be found in our blank verse anterior to Shakspeare."\* David and Bethsabe was, in all probability, written not anterior to Shakspeare, but after he had been at least six or seven years a writer for the stage, and had produced perhaps ten or twelve of his plays, including some of those in which, to pass over all other and higher things, the music of the verse has ever been accounted the most perfect and delicious. We know at least that *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Richard II.*, *King John*, and *Richard III.*, were all written and acted, if not all printed, before Peele's play was given to the world.† But, independently of this consideration, it must

\* Spec. of Eng. Poet. i. 140.

† This is established by the often quoted passage in *Meres's Wit's Treasury*, published in 1598, in which these and others of Shakspeare's plays are enumerated.

be admitted that the best of Peele's blank verse, though smooth and flowing, and sometimes tastefully decorated with the embellishments of a learned and imitative fancy, is both deficient in richness or even variety of modulation, and without any pretensions to the force and fire of original poetic genius. It may be true, nevertheless, as is conceded by Mr. Collier, one of the modern critics with whom Peele has not found so much favour as with Mr. Campbell and with Mr. Dyce, to whom we are indebted for the first collected edition of his plays,\* that "he had an elegance of fancy, a gracefulness of expression, and a melody of versification which, in the earlier part of his career, was scarcely approached."<sup>†</sup> Another of Peele's pieces, entitled 'The Old Wives' Tale, a Pleasant conceited Comedy,' printed in 1595, has excited some curiosity from a resemblance it bears in the story, though in little or nothing else, to Milton's Masque of Comus.<sup>‡</sup> Contemporary with Peele was Robert

\* Dramatic Works of George Peele (with his Poems), by the Rev. Alexander Dyce, 2 vols. 8vo. London, 1829.

† Mr. Hallam's estimate is, perhaps, not quite so high: "Peele has some command of imagery, but in every other quality it seems to me that he has scarce any claim to honour; and I doubt if there are three lines together in any of his plays that could be mistaken for Shakespeare's.... The versification of Peele is much inferior to that of Marlow; and, though sometimes poetical, he seems rarely dramatic."—*Lit. of Eur.* ii. 378.

‡ This was first pointed out by Isaac Reed in the appendix to his edition of Baker's *Biographia Dramatica*, 1782, vol. ii. p. 441. The subject has been examined at length by Warton in his edition of the *Minor Poems of Milton*, pp. 135, 136; and again, pp. 575-577 (2nd edit. Lond. 1791). He observes, "That Milton had an eye on this ancient drama, which might have been the favourite of his early youth, perhaps may be at least affirmed with as much credibility as that he

Greene, the author of five plays, besides one written in conjunction with a friend. Greene died in 1592, and he appears only to have begun to write for the stage about 1587. Mr. Collier thinks that, in facility of expression, and in the flow of his blank verse, he is not to be placed below Peele. But Greene's most characteristic attribute is his turn for merriment, of which Peele in his dramatic productions shows little or nothing. His comedy, or farce rather, is no doubt usually coarse enough, but the turbid stream flows at least freely and abundantly. Among his plays is a curious one on the subject of the History of Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay, which is supposed to have been written in 1588 or 1589, though first published in 1594. This, however, is not so much a story of diablerie as of mere legerdemain, mixed, like all the rest of Greene's pieces, with a good deal of farcical incident and dialogue; even the catastrophe, in which one of the characters is carried off to hell, being so managed as to impart no supernatural interest to the drama.\*

#### MARLOW.

Of a different and far higher order of poetical and dramatic character is another play of this date upon a similar subject, the Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus, by Christopher Marlow. Marlow died at an early age in 1593, the year after conceived the *Paradise Lost* from seeing a mystery at Florence, written by Andreini, a Florentine, in 161<sup>o</sup>, entitled *Adamo*."

\* Greene's plays are collected under the title of 'The Dramatic Works of Robert Greene, to which are added his Poems; with some Account of the Author, and Notes; by the Rev. Alexander Dyce,' 2 vols. 8vo. 1831.

Greene, and three or four years before Peele. He had been a writer for the stage at least since 1586, in which year, or before, was brought out the play of *Tamburlaine the Great*, his claim to the authorship of which has been conclusively established by Mr. Collier, who has further shown that this was the first play written in blank verse that was exhibited on the public stage.\* "Marlow's mighty line" has been celebrated by Ben Jonson in his famous verses on Shakspeare; but Drayton, the author of the *Polyolbion*, has extolled him in the most glowing description,—in words the most worthy of the theme:—

Next Marlow, bathed in the Thespian springs,  
 Had in him those brave translunary things  
 That the first poets had: his raptures were  
 All air and fire, which made his verses clear:  
 For that fine madness still he did retain,  
 Which rightly should possess a poet's brain.†

Marlow is, by nearly universal admission, our greatest dramatic writer before Shakspeare. He is frequently, indeed, turgid and bombastic, especially in his earliest play, *Tamburlaine the Great*, which has just been mentioned, where his fire, it must be confessed, sometimes blazes out of all bounds and becomes a mere wasting conflagration—sometimes only raves in a furious storm of sound, filling the ear without any other effect. But in his fits of truer inspiration, all the magic of terror, pathos, and beauty flashes from him in streams. The gradual accumulation of the agonies of Faustus, in the concluding scene of that play, as the moment of his awful fate comes nearer and nearer, powerfully drawn as

\* *Hist. Dram. Poet.* iii. pp. 107-126.

† *Elegy, "To my dearly beloved friend Henry Reynolds, of Poets and Poesy."*

it is, is far from being one of those coarse pictures of wretchedness that merely oppress us with horror: the most admirable skill is applied throughout in balancing that emotion by sympathy and even respect for the sufferer,—

— for he was a scholar once admired  
For wondrous knowledge in our German schools,—

and yet without disturbing our acquiescence in the justice of his doom; till we close the book, saddened, indeed, but not dissatisfied, with the pitying but still tributary and almost consoling words of the Chorus on our hearts,—

Cut is the branch that might have grown full straight,  
And burned is Apollo's laurel-bough  
That sometimes grew within this learned man.

Still finer, perhaps, is the conclusion of another of Marlow's dramas—his tragedy of Edward II. “The reluctant pangs of abdicating royalty in Edward,” says Charles Lamb, “furnished hints which Shakspeare scarce improved in his Richard II.; and the death-scene of Marlow's king moves pity and terror beyond any scene, ancient or modern, with which I am acquainted.”\* Much splendour of poetry, also, is expended upon the delineation of Barabas, in the Rich Jew of Malta; but “Marlow's Jew,” as Lamb has observed, “does not approach so near to Shakspeare's [in the Merchant of Venice] as his Edward II.” We are more reminded of some of Barabas's speeches by the magnificent declamation of Mammon in Jonson's Alchymist.†

\* Spec. of Eng. Dram. Poets, i. 31.

† The best edition of Marlow's Works is that in 3 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1826.

## LYLY—KYD—LODGE.

Marlow, Greene, and Peele are the most noted names among those of our dramatists who belong exclusively to the age of Elizabeth ; but some others that have less modern celebrity may perhaps be placed at least on the same line with the two latter. John Lyly, the Euphuist, as he is called, from one of his prose works, which will be noticed presently, is, as a poet, in his happiest efforts, elegant and fanciful ; but his genius was better suited for the lighter kinds of lyric poetry than for the drama. He is the author of nine dramatic pieces, but of these seven are in prose, and only one in rhyme and one in blank verse. All of them, according to Mr. Collier, " seem to have been written for court entertainments, although they were also performed at theatres, most usually by the children of St. Paul's and the Revels." They were fitter, it might be added, for beguiling the listlessness of courts than for the entertainment of a popular audience, athirst for action and passion, and very indifferent to mere ingenuities of style. All poetical readers, however, remember some songs and other short pieces of verse with which some of them are interspersed, particularly a delicate little anacreontic in that entitled *Alexander and Campaspe*, beginning—

Cupid and my Campaspe played  
At cards for kisses, &c.

Mr. Collier observes that Malone must have spoken from a very superficial acquaintance with Lyly's works when he contends that his plays are comparatively free from those affected conceits and remote allusions that characterise most of his other productions. Thomas Kyd, the

author of the two plays of *Jeronimo* and the *Spanish Tragedy* (which is a continuation of the former), besides a translation of another piece from the French, appears to be called "Sporting Kyd" by Jonson, in his verses on Shakspeare, in allusion merely to his name. There is, at least, nothing particularly sportive in the little that has come down to us from his pen. Kyd was a considerable master of language; but his rank as a dramatist is not very easily settled, seeing that there is much doubt as to his claims to the authorship of by far the most striking passages in the Spanish Tragedy, the best of his two plays. Lamb, quoting the scenes in question, describes them as "the very salt of the old play," which, without them, he adds, "is but a *caput mortuum*." It has been generally assumed that they were added by Ben Jonson, who certainly was employed to make some additions to this play; and Mr. Collier attributes them to him as if the point did not admit of a doubt--acknowledging, however, that they represent Jonson in a new light, and that "certainly there is nothing in his own entire plays equalling in pathetic beauty some of his contributions to the *Spanish Tragedy*." Nevertheless, it does not seem to be perfectly clear that the supposed contributions by another hand might not have been the work of Kyd himself. Lamb says, "There is nothing in the undoubted plays of Jonson which would authorise us to suppose that he could have supplied the scenes in question. I should suspect the agency of some 'more potent spirit.' Webster might have furnished them. They are full of that wild, solemn, preternatural cast of grief which bewilders us in the *Duchess of Malfy*." The last of these early dramatists we shall notice, Thomas

Lodge, who was born about 1556, and began to write for the stage about 1580, is placed by Mr. Collier "in a rank superior to Greene, but in some respects inferior to Kyd." His principal dramatic work is entitled "The Wounds of Civil War, lively set forth in the true Tragedies of Marius and Sylla;" and is written in blank verse with a mixture of rhyme. It shows him, Mr. Collier thinks, to have unquestionably the advantage over Kyd as a drawer of character, though not equalling that writer in general vigour and boldness of poetic conception. His blank verse is also much more monotonous than that of Kyd. Another strange drama in rhyme, written by Lodge in conjunction with Greene, is entitled "A Looking-glass for London and England," and has for its object to put down the puritanical outcry against the immorality of the stage, which it attempts to accomplish by a grotesque application to the city of London of the Scriptural story of Nineveh. The whole performance, in Mr. Collier's opinion, "is wearisomely dull, although the authors have endeavoured to lighten the weight by the introduction of scenes of drunken buffoonery between 'a clown and his crew of ruffians,' and between the same clown and a person disguised as the devil, in order to frighten him, but who is detected and well beaten." Mr. Hallam, however, pronounces that there is great talent shown in this play, "though upon a very strange canvass."\* Lodge, who was an eminent physician, has left a considerable quantity of other poetry besides his plays, partly in the form of novels or tales, partly in shorter pieces, many of which may be found in the miscellany called *England's Helicon*, from which a

\* Literature of Eur. ii. 379.

few of them have been extracted by Mr. Ellis, in his Specimens. They are, perhaps, on the whole, more creditable to his poetical powers than his dramatic performances. He is also the author of several short works in prose, sometimes interspersed with verse. One of his prose tales, first printed in 1590, under the title of 'Rosalynde: Euphues' Golden Legacie, found in his cell at Silextra' (for Lodge was one of Lyly's imitators), is famous as the source from which Shakspeare appears to have taken the story of his *As You Like It*. "Of this production it may be said," observes Mr. Collier, "that our admiration of many portions of it will not be diminished by a comparison with the work of our great dramatist." \*

It is worthy of remark, that all these founders and first builders-up of the regular drama in England were, nearly if not absolutely without an exception, classical scholars and men who had received a university education. Nicholas Udall was of Corpus Christi College, Oxford; John Still (if he is to be considered the author of *Gammer Gurton's Needle*) was of Christ's College, Cambridge; Sackville was educated at both universities; so was Gascoigne; Richard Edwards was of Corpus Christi, Oxford; Marlow was of Benet College, Cambridge; Greene, of St. John's, Cambridge; Peele, of Christ's Church, Oxford; Lyly, of Magdalen College, and Lodge of Trinity College, in the same university. Kyd was also probably a university man, though we know nothing of his private history. To the training received

\* Hist. of Dram. Poet. iii. 213.—See upon this subject the Introductory Notice to *As You Like It* in *Knight's Shakspere*, vol. iii. 247–265.

by these writers the drama that arose among us after the middle of the sixteenth century may be considered to owe not only its form, but in part also its spirit, which had a learned and classical tinge from the first, that never entirely wore out. The diction of the works of all these dramatists betrays their scholarship ; and they have left upon the language of our higher drama, and indeed of our blank verse in general, of which they were the main creators, an impress of Latinity, which, it can scarcely be doubted, our vigorous but still homely and unsonorous Saxon speech needed to fit it for the requirements of that species of composition. Fortunately, however, the greatest and most influential of them were not mere men of books and readers of Greek and Latin. Greene, and Peele, and Marlow all spent the noon of their days (none of them saw any afternoon) in the busiest haunts of social life, sounding in their reckless course all the depths of human experience, and drinking the cup of passion and suffering to the dregs. And of their great successors, those who carried the drama to its height among us in the next age, while some were also accomplished scholars, all were men of the world—men who knew their brother men by an actual and intimate intercourse with them in their most natural and open-hearted moods, and over a remarkably extended range of conditions. We know, from even the scanty fragments of their history that have come down to us, that Shakespeare, and Jonson, and Beaumont, and Fletcher all lived much in the open air of society, and mingled with all ranks from the highest to the lowest ; some of them, indeed, having known what it was actually to belong to classes very far removed from each other at different pe-

riods of their lives. But we should have gathered, though no other record or tradition had told us, that they must have been men of this genuine and manifold experience from their drama alone,—various, and rich, and glowing as that is, even as life itself.

EARLIER ELIZABETHAN PROSE :—LYLY—SIDNEY—  
SPENSER—NASH, ETC.

Before leaving the earlier part of the reign of Elizabeth, a few of the more remarkable writers in prose who had risen into notice before the year 1590 may be mentioned. The singular affectation known by the name of *Euphuism* was, like some other celebrated absurdities, the invention of a man of true genius—John Lyly, noticed above as a dramatist and poet—the first part of whose prose romance of “Euphues” appeared in 1578 or 1579. “Our nation,” says Sir Henry Blount, in the preface to a collection of some of Lyly’s dramatic pieces which he published in 1632, “are in his debt for a new English which he taught them. ‘Euphues and his England’ \* began first that language; all our ladies were then his scholars; and that beauty in court which could not parley Euphuism—that is to say, who was unable to converse in that pure and reformed English, which he had formed his work to be the standard of—was as little regarded as she which now there speaks not French.” Some notion of this “pure and reformed English” has been made familiar to the reader of our day by the great modern pen that has called back to life

\* This is the title of the second part of the *Euphues*, published in 1581. The first part is entitled ‘*Euphues, the Anatomy of Wit*.’

so much of the long-vanished past, though the discourse of Sir Piercie Shafton, in the *Monastery*, is rather a caricature than a fair sample of Euphuism. Doubtless, it often became a purely silly and pitiable affair in the mouths of the courtiers, male and female; but in Lyly's own writings, and in those of his lettered imitators, of whom he had several, and some of no common talent, it was only fantastic and extravagant, and opposed to truth, nature, good sense, and manliness. Pedantic and far-fetched allusion, elaborate indirectness, a cloying smoothness and drowsy monotony of diction, alliteration, punning, and other such puerilities,—these are the main ingredients of Euphuism; which do not, however, exclude a good deal of wit, fancy, and prettiness, occasionally, both in the expression and the thought. Although Lyly, in his verse as well as in his prose, is always artificial to excess, his ingenuity and finished elegance are frequently very captivating. Perhaps, indeed, our language is, after all, indebted to this writer and his Euphuism for not a little of its present euphony. From the strictures Shakspeare, in *Love's Labour's Lost*, makes Holofernes pass on the mode of speaking of his Euphuist, Don Adriano de Armado—"a man of fire-new words, fashion's own knight—that hath a mint of phrases in his brain—one whom the music of his own vain tongue doth ravish like enchanting harmony"—it should almost seem that the now universally adopted pronunciation of many of our words was first introduced by such persons as this refining "child of fancy:"—"I abhor such fanatical fantasms, such insociable and point-device companions; such rackers of orthography as to speak *dout*, *fine*, when he should say *doubt*; *det*, when he should pronounce

*debt, d, e, b, t; not d, e, t; he clepeth a calf, cauf; half, hauf; neighbour vocatur nebour; neigh, abbreviated ne: this is abominable (which he would call abominable): it insinuateth me of insanie."* Here, however, the all-seeing poet laughs rather at the pedantic schoolmaster than at the fantastic knight; and the euphuistic pronunciation which he makes Holofernes so indignantly criticise was most probably his own and that of the generality of his educated contemporaries.

A renowned English prose classic of this age, who made Llyl's affectations the subject of his ridicule some years before Shakspeare, but who also perhaps was not blind to his better qualities, and did not disdain to adopt some of his reforms in the language, if not to imitate even some of the peculiarities of his style, was Sir Philip Sidney, the illustrious author of the Arcadia. Sidney, who was born in 1554, does not appear to have sent anything to the press during his short and brilliant life, which was terminated by the wound he received at the battle of Zutphen, in 1586; but he was probably well known, nevertheless, at least as a writer of poetry, some years before his lamented death. Puttenham, whose 'Art of English Poesy,' at whatever time it may have been written, was published before any work of Sidney's had been printed, as far as can now be discovered, mentions him as one of the best and most famous writers of the age "for eclogue and pastoral poesy." "The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia," as Sidney's principal work had been affectionately designated by himself, in compliment to his sister, to whom it was inscribed—the "fair, and good, and learned" lady, afterwards celebrated by Ben Jonson as "the subject of all verse"—

was not given to the world even in part till 1590, nor completely till 1593. His collection of sonnets and songs entitled 'Astrophel and Stella,' first appeared in 1591, and his other most celebrated piece in prose, 'The Defence of Poesy,' in 1595. The production in which he satirises the affectation and pedantry of the modern corrupters of the vernacular tongue is a sort of masque, supposed to pass before Queen Elizabeth in Wanstead garden, in which, among other characters, a village schoolmaster called Rombus appears, and declaims in a jargon not unlike that of Shakspeare's Holofernes. Sidney's own prose is the most flowing and poetical that had yet been written in English; but its graces are rather those of artful elaboration than of a vivid natural expressiveness. The thought, in fact, is generally more poetical than the language; it is a spirit of poetry encased in a rhetorical form. Yet, notwithstanding the conceits into which it frequently runs—and which, after all, are mostly rather the frolics of a nimble wit, somewhat too solicitous of display, than the sickly perversities of a coxcombical or effeminate taste—and, notwithstanding also some want of animation and variety, Sidney's is a wonderful style, always flexible, harmonious, and luminous, and on fit occasions rising to great stateliness and splendour; while a breath of beauty and noble feeling lives in and exhales from the whole of his great work, like the fragrance from a garden of flowers.

Among the most active occasional writers in prose, also, about this time were others of the poets and dramatists of the day, besides Lodge, who has been already mentioned as one of Lyly's imitators. Another of his productions, besides his tale of Rosalynd, which has lately

attracted much attention, is a *Defence of Stage Plays*, which he published, probably in 1579, in answer to Stephen Gosson's 'School of Abuse,' and of which only two copies are known to exist, both wanting the title-page.\* Greene was an incessant pamphleteer upon all sorts of subjects: the list of his prose publications, as far as they are known, given by Mr. Dyce extends to between thirty and forty articles, the earliest being dated 1584, or eight years before his death. *Morality, fiction, satire, blackguardism, are all mingled together in the stream that thus appears to have flowed without pause from his ready pen.* "In a night and a day," says his friend Nash, "would he have yarked up a pamphlet as well as in seven years; and glad was that printer that might be so blest to pay him dear for the very dregs of his wit."† His wit, indeed, often enough appears to have run to the dregs, nor is it very sparkling at the best; but Greene's prose, though not in general very animated, is more concise and perspicuous than his habits of composition might lead us to expect. He has generally written from a well-informed or full mind, and the matter is interesting even when there is no particular attraction in the manner. Among his most curious pamphlets are his

\* See Mr. Collier's Introduction to the Shakespeare Society's editions of Gosson's 'School of Abuse,' 1841; and of Northbrooke's 'Treatise against Dicing, Dancing, Plays, and Interludes,' 1843. See also his 'History of Dramatic Poetry,' ii. 277, &c. There is an imperfect list of 'the undramatic productions of Thomas Lodge,' in the introduction to his tragedy of 'The Wounds of Civil War' in the eighth volume of the last edition of Dodsley's Old Plays. Lodge's 'Rosalyn' is reprinted in Mr. Collier's 'Shakespeare's Library.'

† 'Strange News,' in answer to Gabriel Harvey's 'Four Letters.'

several tracts on the rogueries of London, which he describes under the name of "Coney-catching"—a favourite subject also with other popular writers of that day. But the most remarkable of all Greene's contributions to our literature are his various publications which either directly relate or are understood to shadow forth the history of his own wild and unhappy life—his tale entitled 'Never too Late; or, A Powder of Experience,' 1590; the second part, entitled 'Francesco's Fortunes,' the same year; his 'Groatsworth of Wit, bought with a Million of Repentance,' and 'The Repentance of Robert Greene, Master of Arts,' which both appeared, after his death, in 1592. Greene, as well as Lodge, we may remark, is to be reckoned among the Euphuists; a tale which he published in 1587, and which was no less than five times reprinted in the course of the next half century, is entitled 'Menaphon; Camilla's Alarum to slumbering Euphues, in his melancholy cell at Silexendra,' &c.; and the same year he produced 'Euphues his Censure to Philantus; wherein is presented a philosophical combat between Hector and Achilles,' &c. But he does not appear to have persisted in this fashion of style. It may be noticed as curiously illustrating the spirit and manner of our fictitious literature at this time, that in his 'Pandosto,' or, 'History of Dorastus and Fawnia,' Greene, a scholar, and a Master of Arts of Cambridge, does not hesitate to make Bohemia an island, just as is done by Shakspeare in treating the same story in his Winter's Tale. The critics have been accustomed to instance this as one of the evidences of Shakspeare's ignorance, and Ben Jonson is recorded to have, in his conversation with Drummond of Hawthornden, quoted it as a proof that his

great brother dramatist “wanted art,\* and sometimes sense.” The truth is, as has been observed,† such deviations from fact, and other incongruities of the same character, were not minded, or attempted to be avoided, either in the romantic drama, or in the legends out of which it was formed. They are not blunders, but part and parcel of the fiction. The making Bohemia an island is not nearly so great a violation of geographical truth as other things in the same play are of all the proprieties and possibilities of chronology and history—for instance, the co-existence of a kingdom of Bohemia at all, or of that modern barbaric name, with anything so entirely belonging to the old classic world as the Oracle of Delphi. The story (though no earlier record of it has yet been discovered) is not improbably much older than either Shakspeare or Greene: the latter no doubt expanded and adorned it, and mainly gave it its present shape; but it is most likely that he had for his groundwork some rude popular legend or tradition, the characteristic middle age geography and chronology of which he most properly did not disturb.

But the most brilliant pamphleteer of this age was Thomas Nash. Nash is the author of one slight dramatic piece, mostly in blank verse, but partly in prose, and having also some lyrical poetry interspersed, called ‘Summer’s Last Will and Testament,’ which was exhibited before Queen Elizabeth at Nonsuch, in 1592; and

\* Yet Jonson has elsewhere expressly commended Shakspeare for his art. See his well-known verses prefixed to the first folio edition of the Plays.

† See Notice on the Costume of the Winter’s Tale in Knight’s Shakspere, vol. iv.

he also assisted Marlow in his 'Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage,' which, although not printed till 1594, is supposed to have been written before 1590. But his satiric was of a much higher order than his dramatic talent. There never perhaps was poured forth such a rushing and roaring torrent of wit, ridicule, and invective, as in the rapid succession of pamphlets which he published in the course of the year 1589 against the Puritans and their famous champion (or rather knot of champions) taking the name of Martin Mar-Prelate; unless in those in which he began two years after to assail poor Gabriel Harvey, his persecution of and controversy with whom lasted a much longer time—till indeed the Archbishop of Canterbury (Whitgift) interfered in 1597 to restore the peace of the realm, by an order that all Harvey's and Nash's books should be taken wherever they might be found, "and that none of the said books be ever printed hereafter." Mr. D'Israeli has made both these controversies familiar to modern readers by his lively accounts of the one in his 'Quarrels,' of the other in his 'Calamities' of Authors; and ample specimens of the criminations and recriminations hurled at one another by Nash and Harvey have also been given by Mr. Dyce, in the Life of Greene prefixed to his edition of that writer's dramatic and poetical works. Harvey too was a man of great talent; but it was of a kind very different from that of Nash. Nash's style is remarkable for its airiness and facility; clear it of its old spelling, and, unless it be for a few words and idioms which have now dropt out of the popular speech, it has quite a modern air. This may show, by the bye, that the language has not altered so much since the latter part of the sixteenth century as the

ordinary prose of that day would lead us to suppose ; the difference is rather that the generality of writers were more pedantic then than now, and sought, in a way that is no longer the fashion, to brocade their composition with what were called ink-horn terms, and outlandish phrases never used except in books. If they had been satisfied to write as they spoke, the style of that day (as we may perceive from the example of Nash) would have in its general character considerably more resembled that of the present. Gabriel Harvey's mode of writing exhibits all the peculiarities of his age in their most exaggerated form. He was a great scholar—and his composition is inspired by the very genius of pedantry ; full of matter, full often of good sense, not unfrequently rising to a tone of dignity, and even eloquence, but always stiff, artificial, and elaborately unnatural to a degree which was even then unusual. We may conceive what sort of chance such a heavy-armed combatant, encumbered and oppressed by the very weapons he carried, would have in a war of wit with the quick, elastic, inexhaustible Nash, and the showering jokes and sarcasms that flashed from his easy, natural pen. Harvey, too, with all his merits, was both vain and envious ; and he had some absurdities which afforded tempting game for satire. In particular he plumed himself on having reformed the barbarism of English verse by setting the example of modelling it after the Latin hexameter : " If I never deserve any better remembrance," he exclaims in one of his pamphlets, " let me be epitaphed the inventor of the English hexameter !" Nash, again, profanely characterises the said hexameter as " that drunken, staggering kind of verse, which is all up hill and down hill, like the way

betwixt Stamford and Beechfield, and goes like a horse plunging through the mire in the deep of winter—now, soused up to the saddle, and straight aloft on his tiptoes" (in these last words, we suppose, exemplifying the thing he describes and derides).

#### ENGLISH HEXAMETER VERSE.

Harvey, however, did not want imitators in his crotchet; and among them were some of high name. He boasts, in the same place where he claims the credit of the invention, of being able to reckon among his disciples, not only "learned Mr. Stanyhurst,"—that is Richard Stanyhurst, who in 1583 produced a most extraordinary performance, which he called a translation of the First Four Books of the *Æneid*, in this reformed verse,\* but "excellent Sir Philip Sidney," who, he observes, had not disdained to follow him in his *Arcadia*, and elsewhere. This is stated in his 'Four Letters and certain Sonnets, especially touching Robert Greene, 1582.'† But from a preceding publication, entitled 'Three Proper and Witty Familiar Letters lately passed between two University Men, touching the Earthquake in April last, and our English Reformed Versifying,' which were given to the world in 1580,‡ we learn that Edmund Spenser too was for a short time half inclined to enlist himself among

\* This very scarce volume was reprinted, under the care of Mr. Maidment, in 4to., at Edinburgh in 1836.

† Reprinted by Sir E. Brydges in the second volume of the *Archaica*, 1813.

‡ Reprinted in the second volume of 'Ancient Critical Essays upon English Poets and Poesy,' edited by Joseph Haslewood, 2 vols. 4to. Lond. 1811-15.

the practitioners of the new method. The two University men between whom the Letters had passed are Spenser (who is designated *Immerito*) and Harvey, with whom he had become intimate at Cambridge (they were both of Pembroke Hall), and by whom he is supposed to have been introduced to Sidney a short time before this correspondence began. The Letters are in fact five in number; the original three, before the pamphlet was published, having had two others added to them, "of the same men's writing, both touching the foresaid artificial versifying, and certain other particulars, more lately delivered unto the printer." The publication is introduced by a Preface from "a Well-willer" to both writers, who professes to have come by the letters at fourth or fifth hand, through a friend, "who with much ~~great~~ treaty had procured the copying of them out at Immerito's hands." He had not, he declares, made the writers privy to the publication. The merits of Harvey's letters in particular—which form indeed the principal part of the pamphlet, and to which the only one by Spenser originally designed to be given is merely introductory—are trumpeted forth in this Preface in a very confident style:—"But show me or Immerito," exclaims the Well-willer, "two English letters in print in all points equal to the other two, both for the matter itself and also for the manner of handling, and say we never saw good English letters in our lives." "And yet," he adds, "I am credibly informed by the foresaid faithful and honest friend, that himself [the writer of the said two letters] hath written many of the same stamp both to courtiers and others, and some of them discoursing upon matters of great weight and importance, wherein he is said to be

fully as sufficient and habile as in those scholarly points of learning." Nevertheless, this well-wisher, or his faithful and honest friend, was strongly suspected at the time to be no other than Harvey himself. Nash declares in one of his pamphlets that the compositor by whom the Well-willer's epistle, or Preface, was set up, swore to him that it came under Harvey's own hand to be printed. And in another place, addressing Harvey, he says, " You were young in years when you privately wrote the letters that afterward were publicly divulged by no other but yourself. Signior Immerito was counterfeitly brought in to play a part in that his interlude of epistles. I durst on my credit undertake Spenser was in no way privy to the committing of them to print. Committing I will call it, for in my opinion G. H. should not have reaped so much discredit by being committed to Newgate, as by committing that misbelieving prose to ~~the~~ press." Nash's authority, however, is none of the best; and it is fair to add that Harvey himself, in one of his 'Four Letters' published in 1592, speaks of the present letters as having been sent to the press either by some malicious enemy or some indiscreet friend. It can hardly be supposed that he designed to conceal himself under the latter description. But to return to what Spenser tells us of his studies and experiments in English hexameters and pentameters. In one letter, written from Leicester House, Westminster, in October, 1579, he says: "As for the two worthy gentlemen, Mr. Sidney and Mr. Dyer [afterwards Sir Edward Dyer, and greatly esteemed as a writer of verse in his day], they have me, I thank them, in some use and familiarity, of whom and to whom what speech passeth to your credit and

estimation I leave yourself to conceive ; having always so well conceived of my unfeigned affection and zeal towards you. And now they have proclaimed in their ~~speculator~~<sup>speculator</sup> a general surceasing and silence of bald Rhymers, and also of the very best too ; instead whereof they have, by authority of their whole senate, prescribed certain rules and laws of quantities of English syllables for English verse ; having had thereof already great practice, *and almost drawn me into their faction.*" Afterwards he goes farther : " I am more in love," he says, " with English versifying [that was the name by which Harvey and his friends distinguished the new invention] than with Rhyming ; which I should have done [with ?] long since if I would then have followed your counsel." And he concludes, " I received your letter sent me the last week, whereby I perceive you continue your old exercise of versifying in English ; which glory I had now thought should have been ours at London and the court." " Trust me," he adds, " your verses I like passingly well, and envy your hidden pains in this kind, or rather malign and grudge at yourself that would not once impart so much to me." He remarks, however, that Harvey has once or twice made a breach in the rules laid down for this new mode of versifying by Master Drant, that is, Thomas Drant, chiefly known as the author of two collections of Latin poetry, entitled *Sylva*, and *Poemata Varia*, but also the author of some verse translations from the Latin and Greek. " You shall see," says Spenser in conclusion, " when we meet in London (and when it shall be, certify us), how fast I have followed after you in that course : beware lest in time I overtake you." And, as a sample of what he had been doing, he subjoins a few English

Jambics. Six months later we find him still occupied with the new method. Writing to Harvey again in the beginning of April 1580, he says: "I like your late English hexameters so exceedingly well that I also enure my pen sometime in that kind; which I find, indeed, as I have often heard you defend in word, neither so hard nor so harsh [but] that it will easily and fairly yield itself to our mother tongue." Yet from what follows it almost looks as if he were all the while making sport of his solemn friend and his preposterous invention. "The only or chiefest hardness which seemeth," he goes on, "is in the accent; which sometime gapeth, and, as it were, yawneth, ill-favouredly, coming short of that it should, and sometime exceeding the measure of the number; as in *Carpenter*, the middle syllable being used short in speech, when it shall be read long in verse seemeth like a lame gosling, that draweth one leg after her; and *Heaven*, being used short as one syllable, when it is in verse stretched out with a diastole is like a lame dog that holds up one leg." Nash's ridicule is hardly so unmerciful as this. Spenser, however, adds, by way of consolation, "But it is to be won with custom, and rough words must be subdued with use." Afterwards he sets down four lines of English Elegiac verse—asking, "Sein they comparable to those two which I translated you extempore in bed the last time we lay together in Westminster?—

That which I eat did I joy, and that which I greedily  
gorged;  
As for those many goodly matters left I for others."

This can hardly be said in earnest. "I would heartily  
wish," he concludes, "you would either send me the rules

and precepts of art which you observe in quantities, or else follow mine, that M. Philip Sidney gave me, being the very same which M. Drant devised, but enlarged with M. Sidney's own judgment, and augmented with my observations ; that we might both agree and accord in one, lest we overthrow one another, and be overthrown of the rest." From this it would appear that, after all, Drant (whose era was between 1560 and 1570) was, in this matter of English hexameters, before Harvey. But, indeed, long before this Sir Thomas More had amused himself with the same fancy. And the attempt to mould English verse into the form of Latin (which long afterwards exercised the ingenuity of Milton, and which has been revived in our own day) continued to engage some attention down to the close of the sixteenth century. In 1602 was published a small pamphlet entitled 'Observations on the Art of English Poesy, by Thomas Campion : wherein it is demonstratively proved, and by example confirmed, that the English tongue will receive eight several kinds of numbers, proper to itself, which are all in this book set forth, and were never before this time by any man attempted.' Thomas Campion, or Champion, was a poet of some celebrity in his day ; his name occurs, along with those of Spenser and Shakespeare (the others are Sidney, John Owen, Daniel, Hugh Holland, Ben Jonson, Drayton, Chapman, and Marston), in Camden's enumeration in his 'Remains' (first published in 1604) of the most pregnant poetical wits then flourishing. His tract was answered the next year by his brother poet, Samuel Daniel, in 'A Defence of Ryme, against a pamphlet entituled "Observations in the Art of English Poesy ;" wherein is demonstratively proved that

Ryme is the fittest harmony of words that comports with our language.\* This reply appears to have terminated the controversy for the present; and, indeed, although Milton in a later day, in addition to imitating, or attempting to imitate, the metres of Horace, also, like Campion, denounced the Gothic barbarism and bondage of rhyme, it never was again seriously proposed, we believe, to reform our poetry by the entire abolition of the natural prosody of the language, and the substitution of the Greek or Latin.

#### EDMUND SPENSER.

If Harvey had seriously infected Spenser with the madness of his hexameters and pentameters, the reformed versifying might have been brought for a short time into more credit, although Spenser's actual performances in it, as has been remarked, are bad enough to countenance even those of his friend the inventor. But, besides that to change, as this system appears to have required, the entire pronunciation and musical character of a language is as much beyond the power of any writer, or host of writers, as to change the direction of the winds (the two cases being alike governed by laws of nature above human control), Spenser was of all writers the one least likely to be permanently enthralled by the pursuit of such an absurdity. Of all our great poets he is the one whose natural tastes were most opposed to such outlandish innovations upon and harsh perversions of his native tongue—

\* Both Campion's 'Observations' and Daniel's 'Defence' are reprinted in the second volume of the 'Ancient Critical Essays,' edited by Haslewood.

whose genius was essentially the most musical, the most English, and the most reverential of antiquity.

Edmund Spenser has been supposed to have come before the world as a poet so early as the year 1569, when some sonnets translated from Petrarch, which long afterwards were reprinted with his name, appeared in Vander Noodt's *Theatre of Worldlings*; on the 20th of May in that year he was entered a sizer of Pembroke Hall, Cambridge; and in that same year also, an entry in the Books of the Treasurer of the Queen's Chamber records that there was "paid upon a bill signed by Mr. Secretary, dated at Windsor 18<sup>o</sup> Octobris, to Edmund Spenser, that brought letters to the Queen's Majesty from Sir Henry Norris, Knight, her Majesty's ambassador in France, being at Thousars in the said realms, for his charges the sum of £1. 13s. 4d., over and besides 9s. prested to him by Sir Henry Norris."\* There can be little doubt that this entry refers to the poet. The date 1510, given as that of the year of his birth upon his monument in Westminster Abbey, erected long after his death, is out of the question; but the above-mentioned facts make it probable that he was born some years before 1553, the date commonly assigned. He has himself commemorated the place of his birth: "At length," he says in his *'Prothalamion,'* or poem on the marriages of the two daughters of the Earl of Worcester,

At length they all to merry London came,  
To merry London, my most kindly nurse,  
That to me gave this life's first native source,  
Though from another place I take my name,  
An house of ancient fame.

\* First published in Mr. Cunningham's *Introduction* (p. xxx.) to his *'Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court,'* printed for the Shakespeare Society, 8vo. Lond. 1842.

It is commonly said, on the authority of Oldys, that he was born in East Smithfield by the Tower. It appears from the register of the University that he took his degree of Bachelor of Arts in 1572, and that of Master of Arts in 1576. On leaving Cambridge, he retired for some time to the north of England. Here he appears to have written the greater part of his 'Shepherd's Calendar,' which, having previously come up to London, he published in 1579. And he had already, as we learn from his correspondence with Harvey, finished two works entitled his 'Dreams' and 'Dying Pelican,' of which nothing is now known, unless the former (as has been conjectured) be the same afterwards published under the titles of 'The Visions of Petrarch,' 'The Visions of Bellay,' and 'Visions of the World's Vanity,' and he had begun his 'Fairy Queen,' as well as at least designed, and perhaps made some progress in, a poem in Harvey's new mode of versifying, to be entitled 'Epithalamion Thamesis;' "which book," he says, "I dare undertake will be profitable for the knowledge, and new for the invention and manner of handling." The subject was to be treated in the same manner as it is in the Fourth Book of the *Fairy Queen*. He also speaks of another work which he calls his 'Stemmata Dudleiana,' probably a poem in honour of the family of his patron, the Earl of Leicester, uncle of Sir Philip Sidney, of which he says that it must not lightly be sent abroad without more advisement—adding, however, "But trust me, though I never do well, yet in my own fancy I never did better." And Harvey congratulates him on nine 'Comedies,' which he had either written, or was engaged with:—"I am void of all judgment if your Nine Comedies, whereunto, in imitation of Herodotus, you give the

names of the Nine Muses, come not as near Ariosto's Comedies, either for the fineness of plausible elocution or the rareness of poetical, as the Fairy Queen doth to his *Orlando*." But he published nothing more for some years. In his Letter to Harvey written from Leicester House in October, 1579, and more especially in a long Latin valedictory poem included in it, he speaks of being immediately about to proceed across the seas in the service of Leicester, to France, as it would appear, if not farther. "I go thither," he writes, "as sent by him, and maintained (most-what) of him; and there am to employ my time, my body, my mind, in his honour's service." But whether he actually went upon this mission is unknown. In the beginning of August, 1580, on the appointment of Arthur Lord Grey of Wilton as Lord Deputy of Ireland, Spenser accompanied his lordship to that country as his secretary; in March, the year following, he was appointed to the office of Clerk in the Irish Court of Chancery; but on Lord Grey being recalled in 1582 Spenser probably returned with him to England. It has been conjectured that he may have been the person mentioned in a letter to Queen Elizabeth from James VI. of Scotland, dated at St. Andrews, the 2nd of July, 1583 (the original of which is preserved among the Cotton MSS.), where James says in the postscript, "Madam, I have stayed Maister Spenser upon the letter quilk is written with my awin hand, quilk shall be ready within twa days."\* Of how he was employed for the next three or four years nothing is known;

\* See Note by Mr. David Laing on p. 12 of his edition of 'Ben Jonson's Conversations with William Drummond,' printed for the Shakespeare Society, 8vo. Lond. 1842.

but in 1586 he obtained from the crown a grant of above 3000 acres of forfeited lands in Ireland: the grant is dated the 27th of July, and, if it was procured, as is not improbable, through Sir Philip Sidney, it was the last kindness of that friend and patron, whose death took place in October of this year. Spenser proceeded to Ireland to take possession of his estate, which was a portion of the former domain of the Earl of Desmond in the county of Cork; and here he remained, residing in what had been the earl's castle of Kilcolman, till he returned to England in 1590, and published at London, in 4to., the first three Books of his *Fairy Queen*. If he had published anything else since the *Shepherd's Calendar* appeared eleven years before, it could only have been a poem of between 400 and 500 lines, entitled '*Muiopotmos, or the Fate of the Butterfly*,' which he dedicated to the Lady Carey. He has himself related, in his '*Colin Clout's Come Home Again*,' how he had been visited in his exile by the Shepherd of the Ocean, by which designation he means Sir Walter Raleigh, and persuaded by him to make this visit to England for the purpose of having his poem printed. Raleigh introduced him to Elizabeth, to whom the *Fairy Queen* was dedicated, and who in February, 1591, bestowed on the author a pension of 50*l.* This great work immediately raised Spenser to such celebrity, that the publisher hastened to collect whatever of his other poems he could find, and, under the general title of '*Complaints* ; containing sundry small poems of the World's Vanity ;' printed together, in a 4to. volume, '*The Ruins of Time*,' '*The Tears of the Muses*,' '*Virgil's Gnat*,' '*Mother Hubberd's Tale*,' '*The Ruins of Rome*' (from the French

of Bellay), 'Muiopotmos' (which is stated to be the only one of the pieces that had previously appeared), and 'The Visions of Petrarch,' &c., already mentioned. Many more, it is declared, which the author had written in former years were not to be found. Spenser appears to have remained in England till the beginning of the year 1592: his 'Daphnaida,' an elegy on the death of Douglas Howard, daughter of Lord Howard, and wife of Arthur Gorges, Esq., is dedicated to the Marchioness of Northampton in an address dated the 1st of January in that year, and it was published soon after. He then returned to Ireland, and probably in the course of 1592 and 1593 there composed the series of eighty-eight sonnets in which he relates his courtship of the rustic beauty whom he at last married, celebrating the event by a splendid Epithalamion. But it appears from the eightieth sonnet that he had already finished six Books of his *Fairy Queen*. His next publication was another 4to. volume which appeared in 1595, containing his 'Colin Clout's Come Home Again,' the dedication of which to Raleigh is dated 'From my house at Kilcolman, December the 27th, 1591,' no doubt a misprint for 1594; and also his 'Astrophel,' an elegy upon Sir Philip Sidney, dedicated to his widow, now the Countess of Essex; together with 'The Mourning Muse of Thesylis,' another poem on the same subject. The same year appeared, in 8vo., his sonnets, under the title of 'Amoretti,' accompanied by the 'Epithalamion.' In 1596 he paid another visit to England, bringing with him the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Books of his *Fairy Queen*, which were published, along with a new edition of the preceding three books, in 4to. at London, in that year.

In the latter part of the same year appeared, in a volume of the same form, a reprint of his 'Daphnaida,' together with his 'Prothalanion,' or spousal verse on the marriages of the Ladies Elizabeth and Catharine Somerset, and his 'Four Hymns' in honour of Love, of Beauty, of Heavenly Love, and of Heavenly Beauty, dedicated to the Countesses of Cumberland and Warwick, in an address dated Greenwich, the 1st of September, 1596. The first two of these Hymns he states had been composed in the greener times of his youth, and, although he had been moved by one of the two ladies to call in the same, as "having too much pleased those of like age and disposition, which, being too vehemently carried with that kind of affection, do rather suck out poison to their strong passion than honey to their honest delight," he "had been unable so to do, by reason that many copies thereof were formerly scattered abroad." At this time it was still common for literary compositions of all kinds to be extensively circulated in manuscript, as used to be the mode of publication before the invention of printing. These Hymns were the last of his productions that he sent to the press. It was during this visit to England that he presented to Elizabeth, and probably wrote, his prose treatise entitled 'A View of the State of Ireland, written dialogue-wise between Eudoxus and Irenaeus;' but that work remained unprinted, till it was published at Dublin by Sir James Ware in 1633. Spenser returned to Ireland probably early in 1597; and was the next year recommended by the Queen to be sheriff of Cork; but, soon after the breaking out of Tyrone's rebellion in October, 1598, his house of Kilcolman was attacked and burned by the rebels, and, one child having perished

in the flames, it was with difficulty that he made his escape with his wife and two sons. He arrived in England in a state of destitution ; but it is absurd to suppose that, with his talents and great reputation, his powerful friends, his pension, and the rights he still retained, although deprived of the enjoyment of his Irish property for the moment, he could have been left to perish; as has been commonly said, of want : the breaking up of his constitution was a natural consequence of the sufferings he had lately gone through ; but all that we know is that, after having been ill for some time, he died at an inn in King-street, Westminster, on the 16th of January, 1599. Two Cantos, undoubtedly genuine, of a subsequent Book of the Fairy Queen, and two stanzas of a third Canto, entitled 'Of Mutability,' and forming part of the Legend of Constance, were published in an edition of his collected works, in a folio volume, in 1609 ; and it may be doubted if much more of the poem was ever written. As for the poem called 'Britain's Ida,' in six short Cantos, which also appeared in this volume, it is certainly not by Spenser. Besides the works that have been enumerated, however, the following compositions by Spenser, now all lost, are mentioned by himself or his friends :— His Pageants, The Canticles Paraphrased, a poetical version of Ecclesiastes, another of the Seven Penitential Psalms, The Hours of our Lord, The Sacrifice of a Sinner, Purgatory, A Se'ennight's Slumber, The Court of Cupid, and The Hell of Lovers. He is also said to have written a treatise in prose called The English Poet.

The most remarkable of Spenser's poems written before his great work, The Fairy Queen, are his 'Shepherd's

'Calendar' and his 'Mother Hubberd's Tale.' Both of these pieces are full of the spirit of poetry, and his genius displays itself in each in a variety of styles.

The Shepherd's Calendar, though consisting of twelve distinct poems denominated *Æclogues*, is less of a pastoral, in the ordinary acceptation, than it is of a piece of polemical or party divinity. Spenser's shepherds are, for the most part, pastors of the church, or clergymen, with only pious parishioners for sheep. One is a good shepherd, such as Algrind, that is, the puritanical archbishop of Canterbury, Grindall. Another, represented in a much less favourable light, is Morell, that is, his famous antagonist, Elmore, or Aylmer, bishop of London. Spenser's religious character and opinions make a curious subject, which has not received much attention from his biographers. His connexion with Sidney and Leicester, and afterwards with Essex, made him, no doubt, be regarded throughout his life as belonging to the puritanical party, but only to the more moderate section of it, which, although not unwilling to encourage a little grumbling at some things in the conduct of the dominant party among the bishops, and even professing to see much reason in the objections made to certain outworks or appendages of the established system, stood still or drew back as soon as the opposition to the church became really a war of principles. Spenser's puritanism seems almost as unnatural as his hexameters and pentameters. It was probably, for the greater part, the produce of circumstances, rather than of conviction or any strong feeling, even while it lasted ; and it appears nowhere in such prominence as in his Shepherd's Calendar, the first work that he published. It has even been asserted that his Blatant

Beast, in the Sixth Book of the *Fairy Quoen*, is meant for a personification of Puritanism. At any rate, it is evident that, in his latter years, his Christianity had taken the form rather of Platonism than of Puritanism. The puritanical spirit of some parts of the *Shepherd's Calendar*, however, probably contributed to the popularity which the poem long retained. It was reprinted four times during the author's lifetime, in 1581, 1586, 1591, and 1597. Yet it is not only a very unequal composition, but is, in its best executed or most striking parts, far below the height to which Spenser afterwards learned to rise. We may gather from it that one thing which had helped to give him his church-reforming notions had been his study and admiration of the old poetry of Chaucer and the *Visions of Piers Ploughman*. One of his personages, who, in one of the *Æclogues*, discourses much in the style of the principal figure in Langland's poem, is called Piers; and Chaucer is not only in various passages affectionately commemorated under the name of Tityrus, but several of the *Æclogues* are written in a peculiar versification, which appears to be intended as an imitation of that of Chaucer's poetry. So far as Spenser, at this time of his life, can be accounted any authority in such a matter, it may be admitted that he seems to have regarded the verse of his great predecessor as only accentually, not syllabically, regular; but it is still more evident, at the same time, that these intended imitations of Chaucer in the *Shepherd's Calendar* do not really give a true representation of his prosody, according to any theory of it that may be adopted. The flow of the verse is rather that of the *Visions of Piers Ploughman*, only without the regular alliteration and with the addi-

tion of rhyme. As a specimen of the Shepherd's Calendar, we will give, from the second *Æclogue*, which is one of those composed in this peculiar measure, the Tale of the Oak and the Briar, as told by the old shepherd Thenot, who says he conned it of Tityrus in his youth :—

There grew an aged tree on the green,  
 A goodly Oak sometime had it been,  
 With arms full strong and largely displayed,  
 But of their leaves they were disarrayed ;  
 The body big and mightily pight,<sup>a</sup>  
 Throughly rooted, and of wondrous height :  
 Whilom he had been the king of the field,  
 And mochel<sup>b</sup> mast to the husband<sup>c</sup> did yield,  
 And with his nuts larded many swine ;  
 But now the grey moss marred his rine ;<sup>d</sup>  
 His bared boughs were beaten with storms,  
 His top was bald and wasted with worms,  
 His honour decayed, his branches sere.

Hard by his side grew a bragging Brere,  
 Which proudly thrust into th' element,  
 And seemed to threat the firmament ;  
 It was embellished with blossoms fair,  
 And thereto aye wonted to repair  
 The shepherds' daughters to gather flowers,  
 To paint their garlands with his colours ;  
 And in his small bushes used to shrowd  
 The sweet nightingale, singing so loud ;  
 Which made this foolish Brere wex so bold.  
 That on a time he cast him to scold  
 And sneb the good Oak, for he was old.

Why stand'st there, quoth he, thou brutish block ?  
 Nor for fruit nor for shadow serves thy stock.  
 Seest how fresh my flowers been spread,  
 Dyed in lilly white and crimson red,  
 With leaves engrained in lusty green,  
 Colours meet to clothe a maiden queen ?  
 Thy waste bigness but cambers the ground,  
 And dirks<sup>e</sup> the beauty of my blossoms round ;

<sup>a</sup> Strongly fixed.

<sup>b</sup> Much.

<sup>c</sup> Husbandman.

<sup>d</sup> Rind.

<sup>e</sup> Darkens.

The mouldy moss which thee accloyeth'  
 My cinnamon smell too much annoyeth :  
 Wherefore soon, I redē thee, hence remove,  
 Lest thou the price of my displeasure prove.  
 So spake this bold Brere with great disdain ;  
 Little him answered the Oak again ;  
 But yielded, with shame and grief adawed<sup>b</sup>  
 That of a weed he was over-crawed.

It chanced after upon a day  
 The husbandman's self to come that way,  
 Of custom to survieu his ground,  
 And his trees of state in compass round :  
 Him when the spiteful Brere had espied,  
 He causeless eomplained, and loudly cried  
 Unto his lord, stirring up stern strife ; —

O my liege lord ! the God of my life,  
 Please of you pond<sup>k</sup> your suppliant's plaint,  
 Caused of wrong and ornel constraint,  
 Which I your poor vaseal daily endure :  
 And, but your goodness the same secure,  
 Am like for desperate dole to die,  
 Through felonous force of mine enemy.

Greatly aghast with this piteous plea,  
 Him rested the goodman on the lea,  
 And bade the Brere in his plaint proceed.  
 With painted words tho' gan this proud weed  
 (As most usen ambitious folk)  
 His coloured crime with craft to cloak : —

Ah, my Sovereign ! lord of creatures all,  
 Thou placer of plants both humble and tall,  
 Was not I planted of thine own hand,  
 To be the primrose of all thy land,  
 With flowering blossoms to furnish the prime,<sup>m</sup>  
 And scarlet berries in summer time ?  
 How falls it then that this faded Oak,  
 Whose body is sere, whose branches broke,  
 Whose naked arms stretch unto the fire,<sup>n</sup>  
 Unto such tyranny doth aspire,

<sup>f</sup> Coils around.      <sup>g</sup> Advise.      <sup>h</sup> Daunted.

<sup>i</sup> Perhaps the true reading is "encompass roand," that is,  
 circumambulate.    <sup>k</sup> Ponder, consider.    <sup>l</sup> Then.    <sup>m</sup> Spring.

<sup>n</sup> The meaping seems to be, are ready for firewood.

Hindering with his shade my lovely light,  
 And robbing me of the sweet sun's sight?  
 So beat his old boughs my tender side,  
 That oft the blood springeth from woundes wide  
 Untimely my flowers forced to fall,  
 That been the honour of your coronal;  
 And oft he lets his canker-worms light  
 Upon my branches, to work me more spite.  
 And oft his hoary locks down doth cast,  
 Wherewith my fresh flowrets been defast.  
 For this, and many more such outrage,  
 Crave I<sup>o</sup> your goodlyhead to assuage  
 The rancorous rigour of his might:  
 Nought ask I but only to hold my right,  
 Submitting me to your good sufferance,  
 And praying to be guarded from grievance.

To this the Oak cast him to reply  
 Well as he couth;<sup>p</sup> but his enemy  
 Had kindled such coals of displeasure.  
 That the goodman<sup>q</sup> nould<sup>r</sup> stay his leisure,  
 But home him hasted with furious heat,  
 Increasing his wrath with many a threat:  
 His harmful hatchet he hent<sup>s</sup> in hand  
 (Alas! that it so ready should stand!)  
 And to the field alone he speedeth  
 (Aye little help to harm there needeth),  
 Anger nould let him speak to the tree,  
 Enaunter<sup>t</sup> his rage mought cooled be,  
 But to the root bent his sturdy stroke,  
 And made many wounds in the wasted Oak:  
 The axe's edge did oft turn again,  
 As half unwilling to cut the grain;  
 Seemed the senseless iron did fear,  
 Or to wrong holy eld did forbear;  
 For it had been an ancient tree,  
 Sacred with many a mystery,  
 And often crossed with the priests' crew,  
 And often hallowed with holy water due;

<sup>o</sup> The common reading is "craving."

<sup>p</sup> As well as he could.

<sup>q</sup> Farmer.

<sup>r</sup> Would not.

<sup>s</sup> Took.

<sup>t</sup> Lest that.

But like fancies weren foolery,  
 And broughten this Oak to this misery ;  
 For nought mought they quitten him from decay ;  
 For fiercely the goodman at him did lay.  
 The block oft groaned under his blow,  
 And sighed to see his near overthrow.  
 In fine<sup>u</sup> the steel had pierced his pith ;  
 'Tho down to the ground he fell threewith.  
 His wondrous weight made the ground to quake ;  
 The earth shrunk under him, and seemed to shake :  
 There lieth the Oak, pitied of none.

Now stands the Brere like a lord alone,  
 Puffed up with pride and vain plaisirance :  
 But all this glee had no continuance ;  
 For eftsoons winter gan to approach,  
 The blustering Boreas did encroach  
 And beat upon the solitary Brere,  
 For now no succour was seen him near.  
 Now gan he repent his pride too late ;  
 For, naked left and disconsolate,  
 The biting frost nipt his stalk dead,  
 The watery wet weighed down his head,  
 And heaped snow burthened him so sore  
 That now upright he can stand no more ;  
 And, being down, is trod in the dirt  
 Of cattle, and brouzed,<sup>w</sup> and sorely hurt.  
 Such was the end of this ambitious Brere,  
 For scorning eld.

The story is admirably told, certainly ; with wonderful felicity of expression, as well as with a fancy and invention at once the most just and spirited, and the most easy and copious—altogether so as to betoken a poet such as had not yet arisen in the language since it had settled down into its existing form. This earliest work of Spenser's, however, betrays his study of our elder poetry as much by its diction as by the other indications already mentioned : he has thickly sprinkled it with words and

<sup>u</sup> At last.

<sup>w</sup> Bruised.

phrases which had generally ceased to be used at the time when it was written. This he seems to have done, not so much that the antiquated style might give the dialogue an air of rusticity proper to the speech of shepherds, but rather in the same spirit and design (though he has carried the practice much farther) in which Virgil has done the same thing in his heroic poetry, that his verse might thereby be the more distinguished from common discourse, that it might fall upon the ears of men with something of the impressiveness and authority of a voice from other times, and that it might seem to echo, and, as it were, continue and prolong, the strain of the old national minstrelsy ; thus at once expressing his love and admiration of the preceding poets who had been his examples, and, in part, his instructors and inspirers, and making their compositions reflect additional light and beauty upon his own. This is almost the only advantage which the later poets in any language have over the earlier ; and Spenser has availed himself of it more or less in most of his writings, though not in any later work to the same extent as in this first publication. Perhaps also there may be discovered in the Shepherd's Calendar some other traces of his studies in experimental versification at this time (to which his attention may have been awakened by his friend Harvey's lucubrations), besides his attempts to imitate the metre of Chaucer or Piers Ploughman. The work is, at least, remarkable for the variety of measures in which it is composed. The most spirited of its lyric passages is a panegyric upon Elizabeth in the Fourth *Æclogue*, of which, as the work is not much read, we may transcribe a few verses. It is recited by Hobbinol (Gabriel Harvey), who, on the request of Thenot that

he would repeat to him one of his friend Colin's songs, framed before his love for Rosalind had made him break his pipe, replies:—

“Contented I; then will I sing his lay  
Of fair Eliza, queen of shepherds all,  
Which once he made as by a spring he lay,  
And tuned it unto the water's fall:”—

\* \* \* \* \*

See where she sits upon the grassy green,  
(O seemly sight!)  
Yclad in scarlet, like a maiden queen,  
And ermines white;  
Upon her head a crimson coronet,  
With damask roses and daffadillies set:  
Bay leaves between,  
And primroses green,  
Embellish the sweet violet.

\* \* \* \* \*

I see Calliope speed to the place  
Where my goddess shines,  
And after her the other Muses trace<sup>a</sup>  
With their violines.  
Been they not bay branches which they do bear,  
All for Eliza in her hand to wear?  
So sweetly they play,  
And sing all the way,  
That it a heaven is to hear.

Lo, how finely the Graces can it foot  
To the instrument!  
They danceen defy, and singen soot<sup>b</sup>  
In their merriment.  
Wants not a fourth Grace to make the dance even?  
Let that room to my Lady be yeven.<sup>c</sup>  
She shall be a Grace  
To fill the fourth place,  
And reign with the rest in heaven.

<sup>a</sup> Walk.

<sup>b</sup> Sweet.

<sup>c</sup> Given.

And whither rents this bevy of ladies bright,  
Ranged in a row?  
They been all Ladies of the Lake behight<sup>d</sup>  
That unto her go.

Chloris, that is the chiefest nymph of all,  
Of olive branches bears a coronal :  
Olives been for peace,  
When wars do surcease  
Such for a princess been principal..

Ye shepherds' daughters that dwell on the green,  
Hie you there apace :  
Let none come there but that virgins been,  
To adorn her grace ;  
And, when you come whereas<sup>e</sup> she is in place,  
See that your rudeness do not you disgrace.  
Bind your fillets fast,  
And gird in your waste,  
For more fineness, with a tawdry lace.

Bring hither the pink and purple cullumbine,  
With gillyflowers ;  
Bring coronations, and sops in wine,  
Worn of paramours :  
Strow me the ground with daffadowndillies,  
And cowslips, and kingcups, and loved lillies .  
The pretty pance  
And the chevisance  
Shall match with the fair flower-delice.

Now rise up, Eliza, decked as thou art  
In royal ray ;  
And now ye dainty damsels may depart,  
Each one her way.  
I fear I have troubled your troops too long :  
Let Dame Eliza thank you for her song ;  
And, if you come heathers  
When damsons I gather,  
I will part them all you among.

Executed in a firmer and more matured style, and,  
though with more regularity of manner, yet also with

<sup>d</sup> Called, named.

<sup>e</sup> Where.

<sup>f</sup> Array.

<sup>g</sup> Hither.

more true boldness and freedom, is the admirable 'Proso-popoia,' as it is designated, of the adventures of the Fox and the Ape, or 'Mother Hubberd's Tale'—notwithstanding that this, too, is stated to have been an early production—"long sithens composed," says the author in his Dedication of it to the Lady Compton and Mont-eagle, "in the raw conceit of my youth." Perhaps, however, this was partly said to avert the offence that might be taken at the audacity of the satire. It has not much the appearance, either in manner or in matter, of the production of a very young writer, although it may have been written before any part of the *Fairy Queen*, at least in the matured form of that poem; for we can hardly believe that the work spoken of under that name as in hand in 1579 was the same the first part of which was not published till eleven years afterwards. We should say that 'Mother Hubberd's Tale' represents the middle age of Spenser's genius, if not of his life—the stage in his mental and poetical progress when his relish and power of the energetic had attained perfection, but the higher sense of the beautiful had not yet been fully developed. Such appears to be the natural progress of every mind that is capable of the highest things in both these directions: the feeling of force is first awakened, or at least is first matured; the feeling of beauty is of later growth. With even poetical minds of a subordinate class, indeed, it may sometimes happen that a perception of the beautiful, and a faculty of embodying it in words, acquire a considerable development without the love and capacity of the energetic having ever shown themselves in any unusual degree: such may be said to have been the case of Petrarch, to quote a remarkable example.

But the greatest poets have all been complete men, with the sense of beauty, indeed, strong and exquisite, and crowning all their other endowments, which is what makes them the greatest ; but also with all other passions and powers correspondingly vigorous and active. Homer, Dante, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakspeare, Milton, Goethe, were all of them individuals manifestly capable of achieving any degree of success in any other field as well as in poetry. They were not only poetically, but in all other respects, the most gifted intelligences of their times ; men of the largest sense, of the most penetrating insight, of the most general research and information ; may, even in the most worldly arts and dexterities, able to cope with the ablest, whenever they chose to throw themselves into that game. They may not any of them have attained the highest degree of what is called worldly success ; some of them may have even been crushed by the force of circumstances or evil days ; Milton may have died in obscurity, Dante in exile ; " the vision and the faculty divine " may have been all the light that cheered, all the estate that sustained, the old age of Homer ; but no one can suppose that in any of these cases it was want of the requisite skill or talent that denied a different fortune. As for Spenser, we shall certainly much mistake his character if we suppose, from the romantic and unworldly strain of much—and that, doubtless, the best and highest—of his poetry, that he was anything resembling a mere dreamer. In the first place, the vast extent of his knowledge, comprehending all the learning of his age, and his voluminous writings, sufficiently prove that his days were not spent in idleness. Then, even in the matter of securing a livelihood and a position in the world, want of

activity or eagerness is a fault of which he can hardly be accused. Bred, for whatever reason, to no profession, it may be doubted if he had any other course to take, in that age, upon the whole so little objectionable as the one he adopted. The scheme of life with which he set out seems to have been to endeavour, first of all, to procure for himself, by any honourable means, the leisure necessary to enable him to cultivate and employ his poetical powers. With this view he addressed himself to Sidney, the chief professed patron of letters in that day (when, as yet, letters really depended to a great extent for encouragement and support upon the patronage of the great), hoping, through his interest, to obtain such a provision as he required from the bounty of the crown. In thus seeking to be supported at the public expense, and to withdraw a small portion of a fund, pretty sure to be otherwise wasted upon worse objects, for the modest maintenance of one poet, can we say that Spenser, being what he was, was much, or at all, to blame? Would it have been wiser, or more highminded; or in any sense better, for him to have thrown himself, like Greene and Nash, and the rest of that crew, upon the town, and, like them, wasted his fine genius in pamphleteering and black-guardism? He knew that he would not eat that public bread without returning to his country what she gave him a hundred and a thousand fold; he who must have felt and known well that no man had yet uttered himself in the English tongue so endowed for conferring upon the land, the language, and the people, what all future generations would prize as their best inheritance, and what would contribute more than laws or victories, or any other glory, to maintain the name of England in honour

and renown as long as it should be heard of among men. But he did not immediately succeed in his object. It is probably true, as has been commonly stated, that Burleigh looked with but small regard upon the poet and his claims ; however, he at last contrived to overcome this obstacle ; and eventually, as we have seen, he obtained from the crown both lands, offices, and a considerable pension. It is not at all likely that, circumstanced as he was at the commencement of his career, Spenser could in any other way have attained so soon to the same comparative affluence that he thus acquired. Probably the only respect in which he felt much dissatisfied or disappointed was in being obliged to take up his residence in Ireland, without which, it may have been, he would have derived little or no benefit from his grant of land. 'Mother Hubberd's Tale' must be supposed to have been written before he obtained that grant. It is a sharp and shrewd satire upon the common modes of rising in the church and state ; not at all passionate or declamatory, on the contrary, pervaded by a spirit of quiet humour, which only occasionally gives place to a tone of greater elevation and solemnity, but assuredly, with all its high-minded and even severe morality, evincing in the author anything rather than either ignorance of the world or indifference to the ordinary objects of human ambition. No one will rise from its perusal with the notion that Spenser was a mere rhyming visionary, or singing somnambulist. No ; like every other greatest poet, he was an eminently wise man, exercised in every field of thought, and rich in all knowledge—above all, in knowledge of mankind, the proper study of man. In this poem of 'Mother Hubberd's Tale' we still find also both his puritanism and his

imitation of Chaucer, two things which disappear altogether from his later poetry. Indeed, he has written nothing else so much in Chaucer's manner and spirit; nor have we nearly so true a reflection, or rather revival, of the Chaucerian narrative style—at once easy and natural, clear and direct, firm and economical, various and always spirited—in any other modern verse. We will pass over the description of the brave and honourable courtier (intended for Sidney), which is probably known to most of our readers, and the still more famous passage in which the miserable state of a suitor for court favour (supposed to be the author's own case at the time) is depicted with such indignant force and bitterness of expression. What a fulness of matter and driving sleet of words there is in the following description of the moral anarchy wrought by the Ape and the Fox after the former had stolen the lion's hide and other royal emblems, and seated himself on the throne, with his companion and instigator for his chief counsellor and minister!—

First, to his gate he 'pointed a strong guard,  
That none might enter but with issue hard;  
Then, for the safeguard of his personage,  
He did appoint a warlike equipage  
Of foreign beasts, not in the forest bred,  
But part by land and part by water fed;  
For tyranny is with strange aid supported:  
Then unto him all monstrous beasts resorted,  
Bred of two kinds, as griffons, minotaurs,  
Crocodiles, dragons, beavers, and centaurs;  
With those himself he strengthened mightily,  
That fear he need no force of enemy.  
Then gan he rule and tyrannize at will,  
Like as the Fox did guide his graceless skill,  
And all wild beasts made vassals of his pleasure,  
And with their spoils enlarged his private treasures.

No care of justice, nor no rule of reason,  
 No temperance, nor no regard of season,  
 Did thenceforth ever enter in his mind :  
 But cruelty, the sign of currish kind,  
 And 'sdainful pride, and wilful arrogance ;  
 Such follows those whom Fortune doth advance.

But the false Fox most kindly<sup>a</sup> played his part ;  
 For whatsoever mother wit or art  
 Could work, he put in proof ; no practice sly,  
 No counter point of cunning policy,  
 No reach, no breach, that might him profit bring,  
 But he the same did to his purpose wring.  
 Nought suffered he the Ape to give or grant,  
 But through his hand alone must pass the fiant.<sup>b</sup>  
 All offices, all leases by him leapt,  
 And of them all whatso he liked he kept.  
 Justice he sold, injustice for to buy,  
 And for to purchase for his progeny.  
 Ill might it prosper that ill gotten was ;  
 But, so he got it, little did he pass.  
 He fed his cubs with fat of all the soil,  
 And with the sweet of others' sweating toil ;  
 He crammed them with crumbs of benefices,  
 And filled their mouths with meeds of malefices.  
 He clothed them with all colours save white,  
 And loaded them with lordships and with might,  
 So much as they were able well to hear,  
 That with the weight their backs nigh broken were.  
 He chaffered chairs in which churchmen were set,  
 And breach of laws to privy farm did let.  
 No statute so established might be,  
 Nor ordinance so needful, but that he  
 Would violate, though not with violence,  
 Yet under colour of the confidence  
 The which the Ape repos'd in him alone,  
 And reckoned him the kingdom's corner-stone ;  
 And ever, when he aught would bring to pass,  
 His long experience the platform was ;  
 And, when he aught not pleasing would put by,  
 The cloak was care of thrift and husbandry,

<sup>a</sup> According to his nature.

<sup>b</sup> Warrant.

For to increase the common treasure's store ;  
 But his own treasure he increased more,  
 And lifted up his lofty towers thereby,  
 That they began to threat the neighbour sky ;  
 The whiles the prince's palaces fell fast  
 To ruin ; for what thing can ever last ?  
 And whilst the other peers for poverty  
 Were forced their ancient houses to let lie,  
 And their old castles to the ground to fall,  
 Which their forefathers, famous over all,  
 Had founded for the kingdom's ornament,  
 And for their memories' long monument.  
 But he no count made of nobility,  
 Nor the wild beasts whom arms did glorify,  
 The realm's chief strength, and girland of the crown ;  
 All these, through feigned crimes, he thrust adown,  
 Or made them dwell in darkness of disgrace ;  
 For none but whom he list might come in place.  
 Of men of arms he had but small regard,  
 But kept them low, and straitened very hard.  
 For men of learning little he esteemed ;  
 His wisdom he above their learning deemed.  
 As for the rascal commons, least he cared,  
 For not so common was his bounty shared ;  
 Let God, said he, if please, care for the many ;  
 I for myself must care before else any.  
 So did he good to none, to many ill ;  
 So did he all the kingdom rob and pill ;  
 Yet none durst speak, nor none durst of him plain,  
 So great he was in grace, and rich through gain ;  
 Ne would he any let to have access  
 Unto the prince but by his own address ;  
 For all that else did come were sure to fail ;  
 Yet would he further none but for avail<sup>c</sup>.  
 For on a time the Sheep, to whom of yore  
 The Fox had promised of friendship store,  
 What time the Ape the kingdom first did gain,  
 Came to the court her case there to complain,  
 How that the Wolf, her mortal enemy,  
 Had sithence<sup>d</sup> slain her lamb most cruelly,

<sup>c</sup>: Bribe.<sup>d</sup> Since.

And thereby craved to come unto the king  
 To let him know the order of the thing.  
 Soft, Goody Sheep, then said the Fox, not so ;  
 Unto the king so rash ye may not go ;  
 He is with greater matter busied  
 Than a lamb, or the lamb's own mother's head ;  
 Ne certes may I take it well in part  
 That ye my cousin Wolf so foully thwart,  
 And seek with slander his good name to blot ;  
 For there was cause, else do it he would not.  
 Therefore surcease, good dame, and hence depart :  
 So went the Sheep away with heavy heart :  
 So many mo<sup>o</sup>, so every one was used,  
 That to give largely to the box refused.

We must add the winding up of the story, as a sample of the more descriptive portions of the poem. What is going on at last attracts the notice of the powers above :—

Now, when high Jove, in whose almighty hand  
 The care of kings and power of empires stand,  
 Sitting one day within his turret high,  
 From whence he views with his black-lidded eye  
 Whatso the heaven in his wide vault contains,  
 And all that in the deepest earth remains,  
 The troubled kingdom of wild beasts beheld,  
 Whom not their kindly <sup>1</sup> sovereign did weld,<sup>2</sup>  
 But an usurping Ape, with guile suborned,  
 Had all subversed, he 'sdainfully it scorned  
 In his great heart, and hardly did refrain  
 But that with thunderbolts he had him slain.

Jove forthwith calls Mercury to him, and dispatches him to the earth :—

The son of Maia, soon as he received  
 That word, straight with his azure wings he cleaved  
 The liquid clouds and lucid firmament,  
 Ne stayed till that he came with steep descent  
 Unto the place where his prescript did show :  
 There stooping, like an arrow from a bow,

He soft arrived on the grassy plain,  
 And fairly paced forth with easy pain,  
 Till that unto the palace nigh he came ;  
 Then gan he to himself new shape to frame,  
 And that fair face, and that ambrosial hue,  
 Which wonts to deck the gods' immortal crew  
 And beautify the shiny firmament,  
 He doft, unfit for that rude rabblement.

Mercury puts on his hat of invisibility, and, taking his caduceus in his hand, makes a survey of the scene of extortion, oppression, and lawlessness. He sees on all sides more of ill of all kinds than can be told :—

Which when he did with loathsome eyes behold  
 He would no more endure, but came his way,  
 And cast to seek the Lion where he may,  
 That he might work the avengement for his shame  
 On those two caitives which had bred him blame ;  
 And, seeking all the forest busily,  
 At last he found where sleeping he did lie.  
 The wicked weed, which there the Fox did lay,  
 From underneath his head he took away,  
 And then him waking forced up to rise.  
 The Lion, looking up, gan him avize,  
 As one late in a trance, what had of long  
 Become of him, for fantasy is strong.  
 Arise, said Mercury, thou sluggish beast,  
 That here lies senseless, like the corpse deceast,  
 The whilst thy kingdom from thy head is rent,  
 And thy throne royal with dishonour blent.  
 Arise, and do thyself redeem from shame,  
 And be avenged on those that breed thy blame.  
 Thereat enraged, soon he gan upstart,  
 Grinding his teeth, and grating his great heart ;  
 And, rousing up himself, for his rough hide  
 He gan to reach, but nowhere it espied.  
 Therewith he gan full terrible to roar,  
 And chaufed at that indignity right sore ;  
 But, when his crown and sceptre both he wanted,  
 Lord, how he fumed, and swelled, and raged, and  
 panted,

And threatened death, and thousand deadly dolours,  
 To them that had purloined his princely honours !  
 With that, in haste, disrobed as he was,  
 He towards his own palace forth did pass ;  
 And all the way he roared as he went,  
 That all the forest with astonishment  
 Thereof did tremble, and the beasts therein  
 Fled fast away from that so dreadful din.  
 At last he came unto his mansion,  
 Where all the gates he found fast locked anon,  
 And many warders round about them stood :  
 With that he roared aloud as he were wood,  
 That all the palace quaked at the stound,  
 As if it quite were riven from the ground ;  
 And all within were dead and heartless left,  
 And the Ape himself, as one whose wits were reft,  
 Fled here and there, and every corner sought,  
 To hide himself from his own feared thought.  
 But the false Fox, when he the Lion heard,  
 Fled closely forth, straightway of death afeard.  
 And to the Lion came full lowly creeping,  
 With feigned face, and watery eyne half weeping,  
 To excuse his former treason and abusion,  
 And turning all unto the Ape's confusion ;  
 Nathless<sup>h</sup> the royal beast forbore believing,  
 But bade him stay at ease till further prieving.<sup>i</sup>  
 Then, when he saw no entrance to him granted,  
 Roaring yet louder, that all hearts it daunted,  
 Upon those gates with force he fiercely flew,  
 And, rending them in pieces, felly slew  
 Those warders strange, and all that else he met.  
 But the Ape, still flying, he nowhere might get :  
 From room to room, from beam to beam he fled,  
 All breathless, and for fear now almost dead.  
 Yet him at last the Lion spied and caught,  
 And forth with shame unto his judgment brought.  
 Then all the beasts he caused assembled be,  
 To hear their doom, and sad ensample see :  
 The Fox, first author of that treachery,  
 He did uncase, and then away let fly ;

<sup>h</sup> Nevertheless.

<sup>i</sup> Proving.

But the *Ape's* long tail (which then he had) he quite  
Cut off, and both ears pared of their height;  
Since which all apes but half their ears have left,  
And of their tails are utterly bereft.

It would not have been possible to take the *apologue* of the *Ape* and the *Fox* for any covert representation of the state of the English court or government at the time when this poem appeared, or even perhaps to discover the veiled likeness of an existing minister or courtier in any of its delineations;—but the satire was certainly not without some strokes that were likely enough to be felt by powerful individuals, and the entire exposition was not calculated to be agreeable to those at the head of affairs. It was probably, therefore, just as fortunate for Spenser that, in whatever humour or with whatever view it was written, it did not see the light till after he had obtained both his grant of land and his pension.

The *Fairy Queen* was designed by its author to be taken as an *allegory*—“a continued allegory, or dark conceit,” as he calls it in his preliminary *Letter to Raleigh*, “expounding his whole intention in the course of this work.” The *allegory* was even artificial and involved to an unusual degree; for not only was the *Fairy Queen*, by whom the knights are sent forth upon their adventures, to be understood as meaning *Glory* in the general intention, but in a more particular sense she was to stand for “the most excellent and glorious person” of Queen Elizabeth; and some other eminent individual of the day appears in like manner to have been shadowed forth in each of the other figures. The most interesting *allegory* that was ever written carries us along chiefly

by making us forget that it is an allegory at all. The charm of Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress is that all the persons and all the places in it seem real—that Christian, and Evangelist, and Mr. Worldly Wiseman, and Mr. Greatheart, and the Giant Despair, and all the rest, are to our apprehension not shadows, but beings of flesh and blood; and the Slough of Despond, Vanity Fair, Doubting Castle, the Valley of Humiliation, and the Enchanted Ground, all so many actual scenes or localities which we have as we read before us or around us. For the moral lessons that are to be got out of the parable, it must no doubt be considered in another manner; but we speak of the delight it yields as a work of imagination. That is not increased, but impaired, or destroyed, by regarding it as an allegory—just as would be the humour of Don Quixote, or the marvels of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, by either work being so regarded. In the same manner, whoever would enjoy the Fairy Queen as a poem must forget that it is an allegory, either single or double, either compound or simple. Nor in truth is it even much of a story. Neither the personages that move in it, nor the adventures they meet with, interest us much. For that matter, the most ordinary novel, or a police report in a newspaper, may often be much more entertaining. One fortunate consequence of all this is, that the poem scarcely loses anything by the design of the author never having been completed, or its completion at least not having come down to us. What we have of it is not injured in any material respect by the want of the rest. This Spenser himself no doubt felt when he originally gave it to the world in successive portions;—and it would not have mattered much although..

of the six Books he had published the three last before the three first.

But these peculiarities--the absence of an interesting story or concatenation of incidents, and the want of human character and passion in the personages that carry on the story, such as it is--are no defects in the *Fairy Queen*. On the contrary, the poetry is only left thereby so much the purer. Without calling Spenser the greatest of all poets, we may still say that his poetry is the most poetical of all poetry. Other poets are all of them something else as well as poets, and deal in reflection, or reasoning, or humour, or wit, almost as largely as in the proper product of the imaginative faculty; his strains alone, in the *Fairy Queen*, are poetry, all poetry, and nothing but poetry. It is vision unrolled after vision, to the sound of endlessly varying music. The "*shaping spirit of imagination*," considered apart from moral sensibility--from intensity of passion on the one hand and grandeur of conception on the other--certainly never was possessed in the like degree by any other writer; nor has any other evinced a deeper feeling of all forms of the beautiful; nor have words ever been made by any other to embody thought with more wonderful art. On the one hand invention and fancy in the creation or conception of his thoughts; on the other the most exquisite sense of beauty, united with a command over all the resources of language, in their vivid and musical expression--these are the great distinguishing characteristics of Spenser's poetry. What of passion is in it lies mostly in the melody of the verse; but that is often thrilling and subduing in the highest degree. Its moral tone, also, is very captivating: a soul of nobleness, gentle and

tender as the spirit of its own chivalry, modulates every cadence.

Spenser's extraordinary faculty of vision-seeing and picture-drawing can fail to strike none of his readers; but he will not be adequately appreciated or enjoyed by those who regard verse either as a non-essential or as a very subordinate element of poetry. Such minds, however, must miss half the charm of all poetry. Not only all that is purely sensuous in poetry must escape them, but likewise all the pleasurable excitement that lies in the harmonious accordance of the musical expression with the informing idea or feeling, and in the additional force or brilliancy that in such inter-union is communicated by the one to the other. All beauty is dependent upon form; other things may often enter into the beautiful, but this is the one thing that can never be dispensed with; all other ingredients, as they must be contained by, so must be controlled by this; and the only thing that standing alone may constitute the beautiful is form or outline. Accordingly, whatever addresses itself to or is suited to gratify the imagination takes this character: it falls into more or less of regularity and measure. Mere passion is of all things the most unmeasured and irregular, naturally the most opposed of all things to form. But in that state it is also wholly unfitted for the purposes of art; before it can become imaginative in any artistic sense it must have put off its original merely volcanic character, and worn itself into something of measure and music. Thus all impassioned composition is essentially melodious, in a higher or lower degree; measured language is the appropriate and natural expression of passion or deep feeling operating artistically.

in writing or speech. The highest and most perfect kind of measured language is verse ; and passion expressing itself in verse is what is properly called poetry. Take away the verse, and in most cases you take away half the poetry, sometimes much more. The verse, in truth, is only one of several things by the aid of which the passion seeks to give itself effective expression, or by which the thought is endowed with additional animation or beauty ; nay, it is only one ingredient of the musical expression of the thought or passion. If the verse may be dispensed with, so likewise upon the same principle may every other decoration of the sentiment or statement, everything else that would do more than convey the bare fact. Let the experiment be tried, and see how it will answer. Take a single instance. " Immediately through the obscurity a great number of flags were seen to be raised, all richly coloured :" out of these words no doubt the reader or hearer might, after some meditation, extract the conception of a very imposing scene. But, although they intimate with sufficient exactness and distinctness the same literal fact, they are nevertheless the deadeast prose compared with Milton's glorious words :—

" All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand banners rise into the air,  
With orient colours waving."

And so it would happen in every other case in which true poetry was divested of its musical expression : a part, and it might be the greater part, of its life, beauty, and effect, would always be lost ; and it would, in truth, cease to be what is distinctively called poetry or song, of which verse is as much one of the necessary constituents

as passion or imagination itself. Those who dispute this will never be able to prove more than that their own enjoyment of the sensuous part of poetry, which is really that in which its peculiar character resides, is limited or feeble; which it may very well be in minds otherwise highly gifted, and even endowed with considerable imaginative power. The feeling of the merely beautiful, however, or of beauty unimpregnated by something of a moral spirit or meaning, is not likely in such minds to be very deep or strong. High art, therefore, is not their proper region, in any of its departments. In poetry they will probably not very greatly admire or enjoy either Spenser or Milton—and perhaps would prefer *Paradise Lost* in the prose version which Osborne the bookseller in the last century got a gentleman of Oxford to execute for the use of readers to whom the sense was rather obscured by the verse.

Passing over several of the great passages towards the commencement of the poem—such as the description of Queen Lucifer and her Six Counsellors in the Fourth Canto of the First Book, that of the visit of the Witch Duessa to Hell in the Fifth, and that of the Cave of Despair in the Ninth—which are probably more familiarly known to the generality of readers, we will give as our first specimen of the Fairy Queen the escape of the Enchanter Archimage from Bragadoccio and his man Trompart, and the introduction and description of Belphoebe in the Third Canto of Book Second:—

He stayed not for more bidding, but away  
 Was sudden vanished out of his sight:  
 The northern wind his wings did broad display  
 At his command, and reared him up light,

From off the earth to take his airy flight.  
 They looked about, but nowhere could espy  
 Track of his foot; then dead through great affright  
 They both nigh were, and each bade other fly;  
 Both fled at once, ne ever back returned eye;

Till that they come unto a forest green,  
 In which they shrowd themselves from causeless fear;  
 Yet fear them follows still, whereso they been;  
 Each trembling leaf and whistling wind they hear  
 As ghastly bug<sup>a</sup> does greatly them afeare;  
 Yet both do strive their fearfulness to feign.<sup>b</sup>  
 At last they heard a horn, that shrilled clear  
 Throughout the wood, that echoed again,  
 And made the forest ring, as it would rive in twain.

Eft<sup>c</sup> through the thick they heard one rudely rush,  
 With noise whereof he from his lofty steed  
 Down fell to ground, and crept into a bush,  
 To hide his coward head from dying dreed;  
 But Trompart stoutly stayed, to taken heed  
 Of what might hap. Eftsoon there stepped foorth  
 A goodly lady clad in hunter's weed,  
 That seemed to be a woman of great worth,  
 And by her stately portance<sup>d</sup> born of heavenly birth.

Her face so fair as flesh it seemed not,  
 But heavenly pourtrai of bright angels' hue,  
 Clear as the sky, withouten blame or blot,  
 Through goodly mixture of complexions due;  
 And in her cheeks the vermeil red did show  
 Like roses in a bed of lillies shed,  
 The which ambrosial odours from them threw,  
 And gazers' sense with double pleasure fed,  
 Able to heal the sick, and to revive the dead.

In her fair eyes two living lamps did flame,  
 Kindled above at the heavenly Maker's light,  
 And darted fiery beams out of the same,  
 So passing persant and so wondrous bright  
 That quite bereaved the rash beholder's sight:  
 In them the blinded god his lustful fire  
 To kindle oft assayed, but had no might;

<sup>a</sup> Bugbear.

<sup>b</sup> Conceal.

<sup>c</sup> Soon.

<sup>d</sup> Carriage.

For with dread majesty and awful ire  
She broke his wanton darts, and quenched base desire.

Her ivory forehead, full of bounty brave,  
Like a broad table did itself disspread  
For Love his lofty triumphs to engrave,  
And write the battles of his great godhead :  
All good and honour might therein be read,  
For there their dwelling was ; and, when she spake,  
Sweet words like dropping honey she did shed,  
And twixt the pearls and rubins<sup>o</sup> softly brake  
A silver sound, that heavenly music seemed to make.

Upon her eyelids many graces sate,  
Under the shadow of her even brows,  
Working belgardes<sup>r</sup> and amorous retrace ;  
And every one her with a grace endows,  
And every one with meekness to her bows :  
So glorious mirror of celestial grace,  
And sovereign monument of mortal vows,  
How shall frail pen describ<sup>h</sup> her heavenly face,  
For fear through want of skill her beauty to disgrace ?

So fair, and thousand thousand times more fair,  
She seemed, when she presented was to sight ;  
And was yclad, for heat of scorching air,  
All in a silken camus<sup>t</sup> lilly white,  
Purfled<sup>k</sup> upon with many a folded plight<sup>l</sup> !  
Which all above besprinkled was throughout  
With golden aigulets, that glistened bright,  
Like twinkling stars ; and all the skirt about  
Was hemmed with golden fringe.

Below her ham her weed<sup>m</sup> did somewhat train ;  
And her straight legs most bravely were embailed<sup>n</sup>  
In gilden<sup>p</sup> buskins of costly cordwain,<sup>q</sup>  
All barred with golden bents, which were entailed<sup>r</sup>  
With curious anticks,<sup>s</sup> and full fair aumailed<sup>t</sup> ;  
Before they fastened were under her knees  
In a rich jewel, and therein entrailed<sup>u</sup>

<sup>o</sup> Rubies. <sup>r</sup> Beautiful looks. <sup>s</sup> Aspect. <sup>t</sup> Describe.

<sup>1</sup> Thin gown. <sup>k</sup> Gathered. <sup>l</sup> Plait. <sup>m</sup> Dress.

<sup>n</sup> Hanz. <sup>o</sup> Enclosed. <sup>p</sup> Gilded. <sup>q</sup> Spanish leather.

<sup>1</sup> Engraved, marked. <sup>s</sup> Figures. <sup>t</sup> Enamelled. <sup>u</sup> Interwoven.

The ends of all the knots, that none might see  
How they within their foldings close enwrapped be.

Like two fair marble pillars they were seen,  
Which do the temple of the gods support,  
Whom all the people deck with girlonds<sup>w</sup> green,  
And honour in their festivak report;  
Those same with stately grace and princely port  
She taught to tread, when she herself would grace ;  
But with the woody nymphs when she did sport,  
Or when the flying libbard<sup>x</sup> she did chase,  
She could them nimably move, and after fly apace.

And in her hand a sharp boar-spear she held,  
And at her back a bow and quiver gay  
Stuffed with steel-headed darts, wherewith she quelled  
The salvage beasts in her victorious play,  
Knit with a golden baldric, which forelay  
Athwart her snowy breast, and did divide  
Her dainty paps ; which, like young fruit in May,  
Now little, gan to swell, and, being tied,  
Through her thin weed their places only signified.

Her yellow locks, crisped like golden wire,  
About her shoulders weren loosely shed,  
And, when the wind amongst them did inspire,  
They waved like a penon wide disspread,  
And low behind her back were scattered ;  
And, whether art it were or heedless hap,  
As through the flowering forest rash she fled,  
In her rude hairs sweet flowers themselves did lap,  
And flourishing fresh leaves and blossems did enwrap.

Such as Diana, by the sandy shore  
Of sweet Eurotas, or on Cynthus green,  
Where all the nymphs have her unwares forlore,<sup>y</sup>  
Wandereth alone, with bow and arrows keen,  
To seek her game ; or as that famous queen  
Of Amazons, whom Pyrrhus did destroy,  
The day that first of Priam she was seen  
Did show herself in great triumphant joy,  
To succour the weak state of sad afflicted Troy.

w Garlands.

x Leopards.

y Forsaken.

Our next extract shall be part of the *Masque of Cupid* displayed to Britomart the Fair and Bold, the representative of Chastity, in the house of the enchanter Busyrane, from the Twelfth Canto of the Third Book; being the conclusion of the first-published portion of the poem:—

All suddenly a stormy whirlwind blew  
 Throughout the house, that clapped every door,  
 With which that iron wicket open flew  
 As it with mighty levers had been tore;  
 And forth issued, as on the ready floor  
 Of some theatre, a grave personage,  
 That in his hand a branch of laurel bore,  
 With comely haveour and count'rance sage,  
 Yclad in costly garments, fit for tragic stage.

Proceeding to the midst he still did stand,  
 As if in mind he somewhat had to say,  
 And, to the vulgar beckoning with his hand,  
 In sign of silence, as to hear a play,  
 By lively actions he gan bewray  
 Some argument of matter passioned;  
 Which done, he back retired soft away,  
 And, passing by, his name discovered,  
 Ease, on his robe in golden letters cyphered.

The noble maid still standing all this viewed,  
 And marvelled at his strange intendment:  
 With that a joyous fellowship issued  
 Of minstrels making goodly merriment,  
 With wanton bards and rhymers impudent;  
 All which together sung full cheerfully  
 A lay of love's delight with sweet consent;  
 After whom marched a jolly company,  
 In manner of a masque, enraged orderly.

The whiles a most delicious harmony  
 In full strange notes was sweetly heard to sound,  
 That the rare sweetness of the melody  
 The feeble senses wholly did confound,  
 And the frail soul in deep delight nigh drowned;  
 And, when it ceased, shrill trumpets loud did bray,  
 That their report did far away rebound;

And, when they ceased, it gan again to play,  
The whiles the masquers marched forth in trim array.

The first was Fancy, like a lovely boy,  
Of rare aspect, and beauty without peer,  
Matchable either to that imp of Troy  
Whom Jove did love, and chose his cup to bear,  
Or that same dainty lad which was so dear  
To great Alcides, that whenas he died  
He wailed womanlike with many a tear,  
And every wood and every valley wide  
He filled with Hylas' name ; the nymphs eke Hylas cried.

His garment neither was of silk nor say,  
But painted plumes in goodly order dight,  
Like as the sunburnt Indians do array  
Their tawny bodies in their proudest plight :  
As those same plumes so seemed he vain and light,  
That by his gate might easily appear ;  
For still he fared <sup>a</sup> as dancing in delight,  
And in his hand a windy fan did bear,  
That in the idle air he moved still here and there.

And him beside marched amorous Desire,  
Who seemed of riper years than the other swain,  
Yet was that other swain this elder's sire,  
And gave him being, common to them twain :  
His garment was disguised very vain,  
And his embroidered bonnet sat awry ;  
Twixt both his hands few sparks he close did strain,  
Which still he blew and kindled busily,  
That soon they life conceived, and forth in flames did fly.

Next after him went Doubt, who was yclad  
In a discoloured coat of strange disguise,  
That at his back a broad capuccio had,  
And sleeves dependent Albanese-wise ;  
He looked askew with his mistrustful eyes,  
And nicely trod, as thorns lay in his way,  
Or that the floor to shrink he did avize ;  
And on a broken reed he still did stay  
His feeble steps, which shrunk when hard thereon he lay.

<sup>a</sup> Moved forward.

<sup>b</sup> Think.

With him went Danger, clothed in ragged weed  
 Made of bear's skin, that him more dreadful made ;  
 Yet his own face was dreadful, ne did need  
 Strange horror to deform his grisly shade :  
 A net in the one hand, and a rusty blade  
 In the other was, this mischief, that mishap ;  
 With the one his foes he threatened to invade,  
 With the other he his friends meant to enwrap ;  
 For whom he could not kill he practised to entrap.

Next him was Fear, all armed from top to toe,  
 Yet thought himself not safe enough thereby,  
 But feared each shadow moving to or fro ;  
 And his own arms when glittering he did spy,  
 Or clashing heard, he straight away did fly,  
 As ashes pale of hue, and winged-heeled ;  
 And evermore on Danger fixed his eye,  
 Gaint whom he always bent a brazen shield,  
 Which his right hand unarmed fearfully did wield.

With him went Hope in rank, a handsome maid,  
 Of cheerful look, and lovely to behold ;  
 In silken samite<sup>c</sup> she was light arrayed,  
 And her fair locks were woven up in gold :  
 She always smiled, and in her hand did hold  
 An holy-water-sprinkle, dipped in dew,  
 With which she sprinkled favours manifold  
 On whom she list, and did great liking shew,  
 Great liking unto many, but true love to few.

And after them Dissemblance and Suspect  
 Marched in one rank, yet an unequal pair ;  
 For she was gentle and of mild aspect,  
 Courteous to all, and seeming debonair,  
 Goodly adorned, and exceeding fair ;  
 Yet was that all but painted and purloined,  
 And her bright brows were decked with borrowed hair ;  
 Her deeds were forged, and her words false-coined :  
 And always in her hand two clews of silk she twined :  
 But he was foul, ill-favoured, and grim,  
 Under his eyebrows looking still askance ;

And, ever as Dissemblance laughed on him,  
He lowered on her with dangerous eye-glance,  
Showing his nature in his countenance ;  
His rolling eyes did never rest in peace,  
But walked each where for fear of hid mischance,  
Holding a lattice still before his face,  
Through which he still did peep as forward he did pace.

Next him went Grief and Fury, matched yfere;<sup>a</sup>  
Grief all in sable sorrowfully clad,  
Down hanging his dull head with heavy cheer,  
Yet inly being more than seeming sad ;  
A pair of pincers in his hand he had,  
With which he pinched many to the heart,  
That from thenceforth a wretched life they lad.<sup>b</sup>  
In wilful languor and consuming smart,  
Dying each day with inward wounds of Dolour's dart.

But Fury was full ill apparelled  
In rags, that naked nigh she did appear,  
With ghastly looks and dreadful drearihead ;  
For from her back her garments she did tear,  
And from her head oft rent her snarled<sup>c</sup> hair :  
In her right hand a firebrand she did tess  
About her head ; still roaming here and there,  
As a dismayed deer in chace embost,<sup>d</sup>  
Forgetful of his safety, hath his right way lost.

After them went Displeasure and Plessance ;  
He looking lumpish and full sullen sad,  
And hanging down his heavy countenance ;  
She cheerful, fresh, and full of joyance glad,  
As if no sorrow she ne felt ne drad,<sup>e</sup>  
That evil-matched pair they seemed to be :  
An angry wasp the one in a vial had,  
The other in her's an honey lady-bee.  
Thus marched these six couples forth in fair degree.

After all these there marched a most fair dame,  
Led of two grisly villains ; the one Despite,  
The other cleped<sup>f</sup> Cruelty by name :  
She, doleful lady, like a dreary sprite

<sup>a</sup> Together.

<sup>b</sup> Led.

<sup>c</sup> Entangled, knotted.

<sup>d</sup> Hard run and wearied out.

<sup>e</sup> Dreaded.

<sup>f</sup> Called.

Called by strong charms out of eternal night,  
 Had Death's own image figured in her face,  
 Full of sad signs, fearful to living sight ;  
 Yet in that horror shewed a seemly grace,  
 And with her feeble feet did move a comely pace.

Her breast all naked, as nett ivory  
 Without adorn of gold or silver bright,  
 Wherewith the craftsman wonts it beautify,  
 Of her due honour was despoiled quite,  
 And a wide wound therein (O rueful sight !)  
 Entrenched deep with knife accursed keen,  
 Yet freshly bleeding forth <sup>k</sup> her fainting sprite,  
 (The work of cruel hand) was to be seen,  
 That dyed in sanguine red her skin all snowy clean.

At that wide orifice her trembling heart  
 Was drawn forth, and in silver basin laid,  
 Quite through transfix'd with a deadly dart,  
 And in her blood yet streaming fresh embayed ;<sup>1</sup>  
 And those two villains (which her steps upstayed,  
 When her weak feet could scarcely her sustain,  
 And fading <sup>m</sup> vital powers gan to fade)  
 Her forward still with torture did constrain,  
 And ever more increased her consuming pain.

And after her the winged God himself  
 Came riding on a lion ravenous,  
 Taught to obey the message of that elf,  
 That man and beast with power imperious  
 Subdueth to his kingdom tyrannous :  
 His blindfold eyes he bade awhile unbind,  
 That his proud spoil, of that same dolorous  
 Fair dame, he might behold in perfect kind ;  
 Which seen, he much rejoiced in his cruel mind.

Of which full proud, himself uprearing high,  
 He looked round about with stern disdain,  
 And did survey his goodly company,  
 And marshalled the evil-ordered train ;

<sup>k</sup> Out of, forth from.

<sup>1</sup> Bathed.

<sup>m</sup> It may be doubted if this be the right word. Perhaps it should be "began to vade"—that is, to pass away.

With that the darts which his right hand did strain  
 Full dreadfully he shook, that all did quake,  
 And clapped on high his coloured winges twain,  
 That all his meny<sup>n</sup> it afraid did make ;  
 Tho,<sup>o</sup> blinding him again, his way he forth did take.

Behind him was Reproach, Repentance, Shame ;  
 Reproach the first, Shame next, Repent behind :  
 Repentance feeble, sorrowful, and lame ;  
 Reproach despiteful, careless, and unkind ;  
 Shame most ill-favoured, bestial, and blind :  
 Shame loured, Repentance sighed, Reproach did scold :  
 Reproach sharp wings, Repentance whips entwined,  
 Shame burning brand-irons in her hand did hold :  
 All three to each unlike, yet all made in one mould.

And after them a rude confused route  
 Of persons flocked, whose names is hard to read :  
 Amongst them was stern Strife, and Anger stout,  
 Unquiet Care, and fond Unthriftihead,  
 Lewd Loss of Time, and Sorrow seeming-dead,  
 Inconstant Change, and false Disloyalty,  
 Consuming Riotise, and guilty Dread  
 Of heavenly vengeance, faint Infirmitie,  
 Vile Poverty, and, lastly, Death with Infamy.

There were full many moe<sup>p</sup> like maladies,  
 Whose names and natures I note readen<sup>q</sup> well ;  
 So many moe as there be fantasies  
 In wavering women's wit, that none can tell,  
 Or pains in love, or punishments in hell ;  
 All which disguised marched in masquing wise  
 About the chamber by the damozell,  
 And then returned, having marched thrice,  
 Into the inner room, from whence they first did rise.

A volume of poetry such as this, Spenser might fitly,  
 and with some pride in the worth of the offering, as well  
 as " in all humility, dedicate, present, and consecrate, to  
 the Most High, Mighty, and Magnificent Empress,

<sup>n</sup> Company, attendants.      <sup>o</sup> Then.      <sup>p</sup> More.

<sup>q</sup> Know not (wot not) to read.

Elizabeth, to live with the eternity of her fame." The latter Books of the *Fairy Queen* have less continuity of splendour than the three first; but, besides innumerable single stanzas and short passages of exquisite beauty, they contain not a few pictures on a more extended canvass, which must be reckoned among the most remarkable in the work. Among others may be mentioned those of the Temple of Venus in the Tenth, and of the gathering of the rivers at the marriage of the Thames and the Medway, in the Eleventh Canto of the Fourth Book; those of the night spent by Sir Caledon among the shepherds in the Ninth, and of the Dance of the Graees in the Tenth Canto of Book Fifth; and that of the procession of the Seasons in the second of the Two Cantos of Mutability. But, passing over these more brilliant displays of an inventive and florid fancy, we will select, as our sample of this portion of the poem, one of its more soberly coloured passages, in which, nevertheless, there may perhaps be thought to be as much of "the vision and the faculty divine," though otherwise exercised, as in any of those we have yet quoted. The following, from the Second Canto of the Fifth Book, might seem to be a satire written in our own day on the folly and madness of fifty years ago, and it is difficult to believe that it was published two centuries before the events which it so strikingly prefigures:—

There they beheld a mighty giant stand  
Upon a rock, and holding forth on high  
An huge great pair of balance in his hand,  
With which he boasted, in his surquedry,<sup>1</sup>  
That all the world he would weigh equally,

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<sup>1</sup> Pride, presumption.

If aught he had the same to counterpoise ;  
 For want whereof he weighted vanity,  
 And filled his balance full of idle toys ;  
 Yet was admired much of fools, women, and boys.

He said that he would all the earth uptake,  
 And all the sea, divided each from either ;  
 So would he of the fire one balance make,  
 And one of the air, without or wind or weather ;  
 Then would he balance heaven and hell together,  
 And all that did within them all contain,  
 Of all whose weight he would not miss a feather ;  
 And look, what surplus did of each remain,  
 He would to his own part restore the same again.

For why, he said, they all unequal were ;  
 And had encroached upon other's share ;  
 Like as the sea (which plain he showed there)  
 Had worn the earth ; so did the fire the air ;  
 So all the rest did other's parts impair ;  
 And so were realms and nations run away ;  
 All which he undertook for to repair,  
 In sort as they were formed anciently,  
 And all things would reduce unto equality.

Therefore the vulgar did about him flock,  
 And cluster thick unto his leasings vain,  
 Like foolish flies about an honey-crock,  
 In hope by him great benefit to gain,  
 And uncontrolled freedom to obtain.  
 All which when Artegal did see, and hear  
 How he misled the simple people's train,  
 In sdainful wise he drew unto him near,  
 And thus unto him spake, without regard or fear :

“ Thou that presum'st to weigh the world anew,  
 And all things to an equal to restore,  
 Instead of right, meseems, great wrong dost shew,  
 And far above thy force's pitch to soar :  
 For, ere thou limit what is less or more  
 In every thing, thou oughtest first to know  
 What was the poise of every part of yore,  
 And look then how much it doth overflow  
 Or fail thereof ; so much is more than just, I trow.

“ For at the first they all created were  
 In goodly measure by their Maker’s might,  
 And weighed out in balances so near  
 That not a dram was missing of their right ;  
 The earth was in the middle centre pight,<sup>\*</sup>  
 In which it doth immovable abide,  
 Hemmed in with waters like a wall in sight,<sup>†</sup>  
 And they with air, that not a drop can slide ;  
 All which the heavens contain, and in their courses guide.

“ Such heavenly justice doth among them rain,  
 That every one do know their certain bound,  
 In which they do these many years remain,  
 And ‘mongst them all no change hath yet been found ;  
 But, if thou now should’st weigh them new in pound,  
 We are not sure they woold so long remain ;  
 All change is perilous, and all chance unsound ;  
 Therefore leave off to weigh them all again,  
 Till we may be assured they shall their course retain.”

“ Thou foolish elf,” said then the Giant wroth,  
 “ See’st not how badly all things present be,  
 And each estate quite out of order goth ?  
 The sea itself dost thou not plainly see  
 Encroach upon the land there under thee ?  
 And the earth itself, how daily it’s increased  
 By all that dying to it turned be ?  
 Were it not good that wrong were then surceased,  
 And from the most that some were given to the least ?

“ Therefore I will throw down these mountains high,  
 And make them level with the lowly plain ;  
 These towering rocks, which reach unto the sky,  
 I will thrust down into the deepest main,  
 And, as they were, them equalize again.  
 Tyrants, that make men subject to their law,  
 I will suppress, that they no more may reign,  
 And lordlings curb that commons over-awe,  
 And all the wealth of rich men to the poor withdraw.”

“ Of things unseen how canst thou deem aright,”  
 Then answered the righteous Artegal,

\* Pitched, fixed.

† Perhaps, site.

“Sith thou misdeem’st so much of things in sight ?  
 What though the sea with waves continual  
 Do eat the earth, it is no more at all,  
 Ne is the earth the less or loseth aught ;  
 For whatsoever from one place doth fall,  
 Is with the tide unto another brought ;  
 For there is nothing lost that may be found if sought.

“ Likewise the earth is not augmented more  
 By all that dying into it do fade ;  
 For of the earth they formed were of yore :  
 However gay their blossom or their blade  
 Do flourish now, they into dust shall vade ;<sup>u</sup>  
 What wrong then is it if that when they die  
 They turn to that whereof they first were made ?  
 All in the power of their great Maker lie ;  
 All creatures must obey the voice of the Most High.

“ They live, they die, like as he doth ordain,  
 Ne ever any asketh reason why.  
 The hills do not the lowly dales disdain ;  
 The dales do not the lofty hills envy.  
 He maketh kings to sit in sovereignty ;  
 He maketh subjects to their power obey ;  
 He pulleth down, he setteth up on high ;  
 He gives to this, from that he takes away ;  
 For all we have is his ; what he list do he may.

“ Whatever thing is done by him is done,  
 Ne any may his mighty will withstand ;  
 Ne any may his sovereign power shun,  
 Ne loose that he hath bound with stedfast band ;  
 In vain, therefore, dost thou now take in hand  
 To call to count, or weigh his works anew,  
 Whose counsels’ depth thou canst not understand,  
 Sith of things subject to thy daily view  
 Thou dost not know the causes nor their courses due.

“ For take thy balance, if thou be so wise,  
 And weigh the wind that under heaven doth blow ;  
 Or weigh the light that in the east doth rise ;  
 Or weigh the thought that from man’s mind doth flow :  
 But, if the weight of these thou canst not show,

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<sup>u</sup> Pass away.

Weigh but one word which from thy lips doth fall :  
 For how canst thou those greater secrets know,  
 That dost not know the least thing of them all ?  
 Ill can he rule the great that cannot reach the small."

Therewith the Giant, much abashed, said,  
 That he of little things made reckoning light ;  
 Yet the least word that ever could be laid  
 Within his balance he could weigh aright.  
 " Which is," said he, " more heavy, then, in weight,  
 The right or wrong, the false or else the true ?"  
 He answered that he would try it straight ;  
 So he the words into his balance threw,  
 But straight the winged words out of his balance flew.

Wroth waxed he then, and said that words were light,  
 Ne could within his balance well abide ;  
 But he could justly weigh the wrong or right.  
 " Well, then," said Artegal, " let it be tried ;  
 First in one balance set the true aside."  
 He did so first, and then the false he laid  
 In the other scale ; but still it down did slide,  
 And by no mean could in the weight be stayed ;  
 For by no means the false will with the truth be weighed.

" Now take the right likewise," said Artegal,  
 " And counterpoise the same with so much wrong."  
 So first the right he put into one scale,  
 And then the Giant strove, with puissance strong,  
 To fill the other scale with so much wrong ;  
 But all the wrongs that he therein could lay  
 Might it not poise ; yet did he labour long,  
 And swat, and chaufed, and proved every way ;  
 Yet all the wrongs could not a little right downweigh.

Which when he saw he greatly grew in rage,  
 And almost would his balances have broken ;  
 But Artegal him fairly gan assuage,  
 And said, " Be not upon thy balance wroken,  
 For they do nought but right or wrong betoken ;  
 But in the mind the doom of right must be ;  
 And so likewise of words, the which be spoken,  
 The ear must be the balance to decree  
 And judge whether with truth or falsehood they agree.

“But set the truth and set the right aside,  
 For they with wrong or falsehood will not fare,  
 And put two wrongs together to be tried,  
 Or else two falses, of each equal share,  
 And then together do them both compare ;  
 For truth is one, and right is ever one.”  
 So did he, and then plain it did appear  
 Whether of them the greater were attone ;  
 But right sat in the middest of the beam alone.

But he the right from thence did thrust away,  
 For it was not the right which he did seek ;  
 But rather strove extremities to weigh,  
 The one to diminish, the other for to eke,  
 For of the mean he greatly did mislike ;  
 Whom when so lewdly minded Talus found,  
 Approaching nigh unto him cheek by cheek,  
 He shouldered him from off the higher ground,  
 And, down the rock him throwing, in the sea him drowned.

Like as a ship, whom cruel tempest drives  
 Upon a rock with horrible dismay,  
 Her shattered ribs in thousand pieces rives,  
 And, spoiling all her gears and goodly ray,<sup>a</sup>  
 Does make herself misfortune’s piteous prey ;  
 So down the cliff the wretched Giant tumbled ;  
 His battered balances in pieces lay,  
 His timbered bones all broken rudely rumbled :  
 So was the high-aspiring with huge ruin humbled.

That when the people, which had thereabout  
 Long waited, saw his sudden desolation,  
 They gan<sup>b</sup> together in tumultuous rout,  
 And mutining to stir up civil faction,<sup>c</sup>  
 For certain loss of so great expectation ;  
 For well they hoped to have got great good  
 And wondrous riches by his innovation ;  
 Therefore, resolving to revenge his blood,  
 They rose in arms, and all in battle order stood.

<sup>a</sup> Taken all together.

<sup>c</sup> Mislike.

<sup>a</sup> Array.

<sup>b</sup> Perhaps misprint for “ ran.”

<sup>c</sup> The reading of this line may be doubted.

In old Greece and Rome the Poet was regarded as a species of Prophet, and called by the same name ; both were held to be alike divinely inspired ; but there are not many unveilings of the distant future in poetry so remarkable as this anticipation and refutation of the Liberty and Equality philosophism of the end of the eighteenth century in the end of the sixteenth. Nor has the kernel of that false philosophy ever perhaps been so acutely detected as it is in these verses, by the exposure, first, of the assumption involved in the original notion that equality is any where a law or principle of nature ; secondly, of the impossibility of either establishing true equality, or even of ascertaining its existence, by such rude, superficial, almost mechanical methods as human legislation has alone at its command. The essence or reality of things will not be weighed in any scales which its hand can hold.

The “prophetic strain” is rightly spoken of by Milton as the fruit, not of youthful ardour, but rather of “old experience ;” and the greatest poets have for the most part produced their greatest works in their latter years. Spenser’s latest was perhaps his loftiest song of all ; and the subject was also in singular accordance with the beautiful old fable, that the dying song of the swan was its hymn of joy in praise of death and anticipation of immortal bliss—as Cicero tells us, after Plato, “*Ita commemorat, ut cygni, qui non sine causa Apollini dicatis sint, sed quod ab eo divinationem habere videantur, qua, providentes quid in morte boni sit, cum cantu et voluptate moriantur:*” “sic,” he adds, “*omnibus et bonis et doctis esse faciendum.*” [That swans, who are held sacred to Apollo, not for no reason, but because from him they

seem to have the gift of divination, by which they foresee what of good there is in death, die therefore singing and rejoicing ; and so likewise ought all good and wise men.] We will give as our concluding specimen of Spenser this his last published and probably last written poem, his Hymn of Heavenly Beauty :—

Rapt with the rage of mine own ravished thought,  
Through contemplation of those goodly sights  
And glorious images in heaven wrought,  
Whose wondrous beauty, breathing sweet delights  
Do kindle love in high-conceited sprites,  
I fain<sup>a</sup> to tell the things that I behold,  
But feel my wits to fail, and tongue to fold.

Vouchsafe then, O thou most Almighty Sprite !  
From whom all gifts of wit and knowledge flow,  
To shed into my breast some sparkling light  
Of thine eternal truth, that I may show  
Some little beams to mortal eyes below  
Of that immortal beauty there with thee,  
Which in my weak distraughted mind I see ;

That with the glory of so goodly sight  
The hearts of men, which fondly here admire  
Fair-seeming shews, and feed on vain delight,  
Transported with celestial desire  
Of those fair forms, may lift themselves up higher,  
And learn to love, with zealous humble duty,  
The eternal fountain of that Heavenly Beauty.

Beginning then below, with the easy view  
Of this base world, subject to fleshly eye,  
From thence to mount aloft by order due  
To contemplation of the immortal sky ;  
Of the soar falcon so I learn to fly,  
That flags awhile her fluttering wings beneath,  
Till she herself for stronger flight can breathe.

Then look, who list thy gazeful eyes to feed  
With sight of that is fair, look on the frame

---

<sup>a</sup> Fondly desire.

Of this wide universe, and therein read  
 The endless kinds of creatures which by name  
 Thou canst not count, much less their nature's aim,  
 All which are made with wondrous wise respect,  
 And all with admirable beauty decked.

First, the earth, on adamantine pillars founded  
 Amid the sea, engirt with brazen bands,  
 Then the air, still flitting, but yet firmly bounded  
 On every side with piles of flaming brands,  
 Never consumed, nor quenched with mortal hands,  
 And last, that mighty shining crystal wall  
 Wherewith he hath encompassed this all.

By view whereof it plainly may appear  
 That still as every thing doth upward tend,  
 And further is from earth, so still more clear  
 And fair it grows, till to his perfect end  
 Of purest beauty it at last ascond ;  
 Air more than water, fire much more than air,  
 And heaven than fire, appears more pure and fair.

Look thou no further, but affix thine eye  
 On that bright, shiny, round, still moving mass,  
 The house of blessed gods, which men call sky,  
 All sowed with glistening stars more thick than grass,  
 Whereof each other doth in brightness pass,  
 But those two most, which, ruling night and day,  
 As king and queen the heaven's empire sway ;

And tell me then, what hast thou ever seen  
 That to their beauty may compared be ?  
 Or can the sight that is most sharp and keen  
 Endure their captain's flaming head to see ?  
 How much less those much higher in degree,  
 And so much fairer, and much more than these,  
 As these are fairer than the land and seas ?

For far above these heavens which here we see  
 Be others far exceeding these in light,  
 Not bounded, not corrupt, as these same be,  
 But infinite in largeness and in height,  
 Unmoving, uncorrupt, and spotless bright,  
 That need no sun to illuminate their spheres,  
 But their own native light, far passing theirs.

And, as these heavens still by degrees arise,  
Until they come to their First Mover's bound,  
That in his mighty compass doth comprise  
And carry all the rest with him around,  
So those likewise do by degrees redound  
And rise more fair, till they at last arrive  
To the most fair, whereto they all do strive.

Fair is the heaven where happy souls have place,  
In full enjoyment of felicity,  
Whence they do still behold the glorious face  
Of the divine eternal majesty :  
More fair is that where those idees on high  
Enranged be which Plato so admired,  
And pure intelligences from God inspired.

Yet fairer is that heaven in which do reign  
The sovereign powers and mighty potentates  
Which in their high protections do contain  
All mortal princes and imperial states ;  
And fairer yet, whereas<sup>b</sup> the royal seats  
And heavenly dominations are set,  
From whom all earthly governance is fet. :

Yet far more fair be those bright cherubims,  
Which all with golden wings are overdight,  
And those eternal burning seraphims,  
Which from their faces dart out fiery light :  
Yet fairer than they both, and much more bright,  
Be the angels and archangels, which attend  
On God's own person without rest or end.

These thus in fair each other far excelling,  
As to the highest they approach more near,  
Yet is that brightness, far beyond all telling,  
Fairer than all the rest which there appear,  
Though all their beauties joined together were ;  
How then can mortal tongue hope to express  
The image of such endless perfectness ?

Cease then, my tongue ! and lend unto my mind  
Leave to bethink how great that beauty is

---

<sup>b</sup> Where.

Whose utmost parts so beautiful I find ;  
 How much more these essential parts of his,  
 His truth, his love, his wisdom, and his bliss,  
 His grace, his doom, his mercy, and his might,  
 By which he lends us of himself a sight !

Those unto all he daily does display,  
 And shew himself in the image of his grace,  
 As in a looking-glass, through which he may  
 Be seen of all his creatures vile and base,  
 That are unable else to see his face,  
 His glorious face, which glistereth else so bright  
 That the angels themselves cannot endure his sight.

But we, frail wights ! whose sight cannot sustain  
 The sun's bright<sup>e</sup> beams when he on us doth shine,  
 But that their points rebutted back again  
 Are dulled, how can we see with feeble eyne  
 The glory of that majesty divine  
 In sight of whom both sun and moon are dark,  
 Compared to his least resplendent spark ?

The means, therefore, which unto us is lent  
 Him to behold is on his works to look,  
 Which he hath made in beauty excellent,  
 And in the same, as in a brazen book,  
 To read enregistered in every nook  
 His goodness, which his beauty doth declare ;  
 For all that's good is beautiful and fair.

Thence gathering plumes of perfect speculation,  
 To imp the wings of thy high-flying mind,  
 Mount up aloft through heavenly contemplation  
 From this dark world, whose damps the soul do blind,  
 And, like the native brood of eagles' kind,  
 On that bright Sun of Glory fix thine eyes,  
 Cleared from gross mists of frail infirmities.

Humbled with fear and awful reverence,  
 Before the footstool of his majesty  
 Throw thyself down with trembling innocence,  
 Ne dare look up with corruptible eye  
 On the draf<sup>d</sup> face of that great Deity,

• Commonly printed "sun-bright."

<sup>d</sup> Dread.

For fear lest, if he chance to look on thee,  
Thou turn to nought and quite confounded be.

But lowly fall before his mercy-seat,  
Close-covered with the Lamb's integrity  
From the just wrath of this avengeful threat  
That sits upon the righteous throne on high :  
His throne is built upon eternity,  
More firm and durable than steel or brass,  
Or the hard diamond, which them both doth pass.

His sceptre is the rod of Righteousness,  
With which he bruiseth all his foes to dust,  
And the great Dragon strongly doth repress  
Under the rigour of his judgment just ;  
His seat is Truth, to which the faithful trust,  
From whence proceed her beams, so pure and bright,  
That all about him sheddeth glorious light :

Light far exceeding that bright-blazing spark  
Which darted is from Titan's flaming head,  
That with his beams enlumineth the dark  
And dampish air, whereby all things are read,  
Whose nature yet so much is marvelled  
Of mortal wits that it doth much amaze  
The greatest wizards which thereon do gaze.

But that immortal light which there doth shine  
Is many thousand times more bright, more clear,  
More excellent, more glorious, more divine,  
Through which to God all mortal actions here,  
And even the thoughts of men, do plain appear ;  
For from the Eternal Truth it doth proceed,  
Through heavenly virtue which her beams do breed.

With the great glory of that wondrous light  
His throne is all encompassed around,  
And hid in his own brightness from the sight  
Of all that look thereon with eyes unsound ;  
And underneath his feet are to be found  
Thunder, and lightning, and tempestuous fire,  
The instruments of his avenging ire.

There in his bosom Sapience doth sit,  
The sovereign dearling of the Deity,  
Clad like a queen in royal robes, most fit

For so great power and peerless majesty,  
 And all with gems and jewels gorgeously  
 Adorned, that brighter than the stars appear,  
 And make her native brightness seem more clear.

And on her head a crown of purest gold  
 Is set, in sign of highest sovereignty ;  
 And in her hand a sceptre she doth hold  
 With which she rules the house of God on high,  
 And menageth the ever-moving sky,  
 And in the same these lower creatures all  
 Subjected to her power imperial.

Both heaven and earth obey unto her will,  
 And all the creatures which they both contain ;  
 For of her fulness, which the world doth fill,  
 They all partake, and do in state remain  
 As their great Maker did at first ordain,  
 Through observation of her high behest,  
 By which they first were made and still increased.

The fairness of her face no tongue can tell,  
 For she the daughters of all women's race,  
 And angels eke, in beauty doth excel,  
 Sparkled on her from God's own glorious face,  
 And more increased by her own goodly grace,  
 That it doth far exceed all human thought,  
 Ne can on earth compared be to aught :

Ne could that painter, had he lived yet,  
 Which pictured Venus with so curious quill,  
 That all posterity admired it,  
 Have pourtrayed this, for all his maistering skill ;  
 Ne she herself, had she remained still,  
 And were as fair as fabling wits do feign,  
 Could once come near this beauty sovereign.

But had those wits, the wonders of their days,  
 Or that sweet Teian poet which did spend  
 His plenteous vein in setting forth her praise,  
 Seen but a glimpse of this which I pretend,\*  
 How wondrously would he her face commend,

Above that idol of his feigning thought,  
That all the world should with his rhymes be fraught !

How then dare I, the novice of his art,  
Presume to picture so divine a wight,  
Or hope to express her least perfection's part,  
Whose beauty fills the heavens with her light,  
And darks the earth with shadow of her sight ?  
Ah, gentle Muse ! thou art too weak and faint  
The portrait of so heavenly hue to paint.

Let angels, which her goodly face behold  
And see at will, her sovereign praises sing,  
And those most saered mysteries unfold  
Of that fair love of mighty Heaven's King ;  
Enough is me to admire so heavenly thing,  
And, being thus with her huge love possessed,  
In the only wonder of her self to rest.

But whoso may, thrice happy man him hold,  
Of all on earth whom God so much doth grace,  
And lets his own beloved to behold ;  
For in the view of her celestial face  
All joy, all bliss, all happiness have place ;  
Ne ought on earth can want unto the wight  
Who of her self can win the wishful sight.

For she, out of her secret treasury,  
Plenty of riches forth on him will pour,  
Even heavenly riches, which there hidden lie  
Within the closet of her chaste bower,  
The eternal portion of her precious dower,  
Which mighty God hath given to her free,  
And to all those which thereof worthy be.

None thereof worthy be but those whom she  
Vouchsafeth to her presence to receive,  
And letteth them her lovely face to see,  
Whereof such wondrous pleasure they conceive,  
And sweet contentment, that it doth bereave  
Their soul of sense through infinite delight,  
And them transport from flesh into the sprite ;

In which they see such admirable things  
As carries them into an extasy,  
And hear such heavenly notes and carollings

Of God's high praise, that fills the brazen sky,  
 And feel such joy and pleasure inwardly,  
 That maketh them all worldly cares forget,  
 And only think on that before them set.

Ne from thenceforth doth any fleshly sense  
 Or idle thought of earthly things remain,  
 But all that erst seemed sweet seems now offence,  
 And all that pleased erst now seems to pain :  
 Their joy, their comfort, their desire, their gain,  
 Is fixed all on that which now they see ;  
 All other sights but feigned shadows be.

And that fair lamp which useth to inflame  
 The hearts of men with self-consuming fire  
 Thenceforth seems foul, and full of sinful blame ;  
 And all that pomp to which proud minds aspire  
 By name of honour, and so much desire,  
 Seems to them baseness, and all riches dross,  
 And all mirth sadness, and all lucre loss.

So full their eyes are of that glorious sight,  
 And senses fraught with such satiety,  
 That in nought else on earth they can delight  
 But in the aspect of that felicity,  
 Which they have written in their inward eye,  
 On which they feed, and in their fastened mind  
 All happy joy and full contentment find.

Ah then, my hungry soul ! which long hast fed  
 On idle fancies of my foolish thought,  
 And, with false Beauty's flattering bait misled,  
 Hast after vain deceitful shadows sought,  
 Which all are fled, and now have left thee nought  
 But late repentance through thy folly's grief,  
 Ah ! cease to gaze on matter of thy grief;

And look at last up to that sovereign light  
 From whose pure beams all perfect Beauty springs,  
 That kindleth love in every godly sprite,  
 Even the Love of God, which loathing brings  
 Of this vile world and these gay-sceming things ;  
 With whose sweet pleasures being so possessed,  
 Thy straying thoughts henceforth for ever rest.

## MINOR ELIZABETHAN POETRY.

In the six or seven years from 1590 to 1596, what a world of wealth had thus been added to our poetry by Spenser alone! what a different thing from what it was before had the English language been made by his writings to natives, to foreigners, to all posterity! But England was now a land of song, and the busiest and most productive age of our poetical literature had fairly commenced. What are commonly called the minor poets of the Elizabethan age are to be counted by hundreds, and few of them are altogether without merit. If they have nothing else, the least gifted of them have at least something of the freshness and airiness of that balmy morn, some tones caught from their greater contemporaries, some echoes of the spirit of music that then filled the universal air. For the most part the minor Elizabethan poetry is remarkable for ingenuity and elaboration, often carried to the length of quaintness, both in the thought and the expression; but, if there be more in it of art than of nature, the art is still that of a high school, and always consists in something more than the mere disguising of prose in the dress of poetry. If it is sometimes unnatural, it is at least very seldom simply insipid, like much of the well-sounding verse of more recent eras. The writers are always in earnest, whether with their nature or their art; they never write from no impulse, and with no object except that of stringing commonplaces into rhyme or rhythm; even when it is most absurd, what they produce is still fanciful, or at the least fantastical. The breath of some sort of life or other is

almost always in it. The poorest of it is distinguished from prose by something more than the mere sound.

## WARNER. \*

The three authors of the poems of most pretension, with the exception of the *Fairy Queen*, that appeared during the period now under review, are Warner, Drayton, and Daniel. William Warner is supposed to have been born about the year 1558; he died in 1608. He has told us himself (in his *Eleventh Book*, chapter 62), that his birth-place was London, and that his father was one of those who sailed with Chancellor to Muscovy, in 1555: this, he says, was before he himself was born. Warner's own profession was the not particularly poetical one of an attorney of the Common Pleas. According to Anthony Wood, who makes him to have been a Warwickshire man, he had before 1586 written several pieces of verse, "whereby his name was cried up among the minor poets;" but this is probably a mistake; none of this early poetry imputed to Warner is now known to exist; and in the Preface to his *Albion's England*, he seems to intimate that that was his first performance in verse. "Written," he says, "have I already in prose, allowed [that is, with the approbation] of some; and now offer I verse, attending indifferent censures" [impartial judgments]. In his Dedication to Henry Carey, the first Lord Hunsdon, he speaks of a former book, which he had dedicated to the son of that Lord—"To him that from your honour deriveth his birth." This, we suppose, must be his prose work entitled '*Syrinx, or a Sevenfold History*, pleasant and profitable, comical and

tragical,' of which the only edition known to exist is dated 1597, but which was licensed in 1584, and was probably first printed about that time. In the Dedication to his poem he explains the meaning of the title, which is not very obvious:—"This our whole island," he observes, "anciently called Britain, but more anciently Albion, presently containing two kingdoms, England and Scotland, is cause (right honourable) that, to distinguish the former, whose only occurrents [occurrences] I abridge from our history, I entitle this my book *Albion's England*." 'Albion's England' first appeared, in thirteen Books, in 1586: and was reprinted in 1589, in 1592, in 1596, in 1597, and in 1602. In 1606 the author added a "Continuance," or continuation, in three Books; and the whole work was republished (without, however, the last three Books having been actually reprinted) in 1612. In this last edition it is described on the title-page as "now revised, and newly enlarged [by the author] a little before his death." It thus appears that, so long as its popularity lasted, Albion's England was one of the most popular long poems ever written. But that was only for about twenty years: although the earlier portion of it had in less than that time gone through half a dozen editions, the Continuation, published in 1606, sold so indifferently that enough of the impression still remained to complete the book when the whole was republished in 1612, and after that no other edition was ever called for, till the poem was reprinted in Chalmers's collection in our own day. The entire neglect into which it so soon fell, from the height of celebrity and popular favour, was probably brought about by various causes. Warner, according to Anthony Wood,

was ranked by his contemporaries on a level with Spenser, and they were called the Homer and Virgil of their age. If he and Spenser were ever equally admired, it must have been by very different classes of readers. 'Albion's England' is undoubtedly a work of very remarkable talent of its kind. It is in form a history of England, or Southern Britain, from the Deluge to the reign of James I., but may fairly be said to be, as the title-page of the last edition describes it, "not barren in variety of inventive intermixtures." Or, to use the author's own words in his Preface, he certainly, as he hopes, has no great occasion to fear that he has grossly failed "in verity, brevity, invention, and variety, profitable, pathetical, pithy, and pleasant." In fact, it is one of the liveliest and most amusing poems ever written. Every striking event or legend that the old chronicles afford is seized hold of, and related always clearly, often with very considerable spirit and animation. But it is far from being a mere compilation; several of the narratives are not to be found any where else, and a large proportion of the matter is Warner's own, in every sense of the word. In this, as well as in other respects, it has greatly the advantage over the 'Mirror for Magistrates', as a rival to which work it was perhaps originally produced, and with the popularity of which it could scarcely fail considerably to interfere. Though a long poem (not much under 10,000 verses), it is still a much less ponderous work than the Mirror, absolutely as well as specifically. Its variety, though not obtained by any very artificial method, is infinite: not only are the stories it selects, unlike those in the Mirror, generally of a merry cast, and much more briefly and smartly told, but the reader is never

kept long even on the same track or ground : all subjects, all departments of human knowledge or speculation, from theology down to common arithmetic, are intermixed, or rather interlaced, with the histories and legends in the most extraordinary manner. The verse is the favourite fourteen syllable line of that age, the same in reality with that which has in modern times been commonly divided into two lines, the first of eight, the second of six syllables, and which in that form is still most generally used for short compositions in verse, more especially for those of a narrative or otherwise popular character. What Warner was chiefly admired for in his own day was his style. Meres in his 'Wit's Treasury' mentions him as one of those by whom the English tongue in that age had been "mightily enriched, and gorgeously invested in rare ornaments and resplendent habiliments." And for fluency, combined with precision and economy of diction, Warner is probably unrivalled among the writers of English verse. We do not know whether his professional studies and habits may have contributed to give this character to his style ; but, if the poetry of attorneys be apt to take this curt, direct, lucid, and at the same time flowing shape, it is a pity that we had not a little more of it. His command of the vulgar tongue, in particular, is wonderful. This indeed is perhaps his most remarkable poetical characteristic ; and the tone which was thus given to his poem (being no doubt that of his own mind) may be conjectured to have been in great part the source both of its great popularity for a time, and of the neglect and oblivion into which it was afterwards allowed to drop. That Warner's poetry and that of Spenser could have ever come in one another's

way is impossible. ‘ Albion’s England’ must from the first have been a book rather for the many than the few,—for the kitchen rather than the hall ; its spirit is not, what it has been sometimes called, merely naïve, but essentially coarse and vulgar. We do not allude so much to any particular abundance of warm description, or freedom of language, as to the low note on which the general strain of the composition is pitched. With all its force and vivacity, and even no want of fancy, at times, and graphic descriptive power, it is poetry with as little of high imagination in it as any that was ever written. Warner’s is only at the most a capital poetical business style. Its positive offences, however, in the way of broadness and indecency of allusion are also very considerable—and are more pervading, run more through its whole texture, than the same thing will be found to do in the writing of any other eminent poet of that time. When the poem was first produced, the middle classes in general, for whom we must suppose it to have been principally intended, were still unrefined enough not to be scared or offended by this grossness, but rather to relish and enjoy it ; this is proved by the eagerness with which so many editions were called for in so short a time ; we do not therefore believe that, as has been said, “ its publication was at one time interdicted by the Star-Chamber for no other reason, that can now be assigned, but that it contains some love-stories more simply than delicately related.”\* The prohibition by the Star-Chamber was of the first edition, and apparently before it had been published ; and the ground seems to have been merely the invasion of the property of one printer by another.

\* Campbell, *Specimens*, p. 71 (edit. of 1844).

(in whose house a seizure of the copies he had thrown off was made by the wardens of the Stationers' Company, he, it is stated, having been forbidden to print the book both by the Archbishop of Canterbury and by the wardens, and his doing so being also contrary to the late decrees of the Honourable Court of Star-Chamber).\* If the book had been attempted to be suppressed for the nakedness of some of the descriptions, it probably would not have appeared at all—whereas it was given to the world that same year from the press of another printer, and was afterwards freely multiplied, as we have seen, in a rapid succession of new editions. But by the first years of the next century a new generation had grown up—and even among the most numerous class of readers a change of manners had taken place which made it impossible that such a work as 'Albion's England' should retain the favour it had once enjoyed. It was probably now universally voted vulgar, and held to have been suitable only for a more barbarous age. Nevertheless, the poem, as we have said, has very remarkable merit in some respects, and many passages, or rather portions of passages, in it may still be read with pleasure. It is also in the highest degree curious both as a repository of our old language, and for many notices of the manners and customs of our ancestors which are scattered up and down in it. All that is commonly known of Warner is from the story of Argentile and Curan, which has been reprinted from his Fourth Book by Mrs. Cooper in The Muses' Library (1738), and by Percy in his Reliques, and that of The Patient Countess, which Percy has also given from his Eighth Book. We shall endeavour to

\* See Ritson's *Bibliographia Poetica*, p. 385, note.

select a few such short passages as may convey a fair notion of what the work contains and of the manner in which it is executed. It is difficult, for the reason that has been stated above, to find many pages, at least in the more interesting parts of the poem, that can be transcribed entire.

The following passage from the Third Book, being the conclusion of the 17th Chapter, is a specimen of Warner's very happiest style of narration.—He has related Caesar's victory over the Britons, which he says was won with difficulty, the conquest of the country having been only accomplished through the submission of that “ traitorous knight, the Earl of London,” whose disloyal example in yielding his charge and city to the foe was followed by the other cities ; and then he winds up thus:—

But he, that won in every war, at Rome in civil robe  
Was stabbed to death: no certainty is underneath this  
globe;

The good are envied of the bad, and glory finds disdain,  
And people are in constancy as April is in rain;  
Whereof, amidst our serious pen, this fable entertain:—

An Ass, an Old Man, and a Boy did through the city  
pass;

And, whilst the wanton Boy did ride, the Old Man led  
the ass.

See yonder doting fool, said folk, that crawleth scarce  
for age,

Doth set the boy upon his ass, and makes himself his  
page.

Anon the blamed Boy alights, and lets the Old Man  
ride,

Ahd; as the Old man did before, the Boy the Ass did  
guide.

---

\* In the printed copy “ a.” The edition before us, that of 1612, abounds with typographical errata.

But, passing so, the people then did much the Old Man blame,  
 And told him, Churl, thy limbs be tough; let ride the boy, for shame.  
 The fault thus found, both Man and Boy did back the ass and ride;  
 Then that the ass was over-charged each man that met them cried.  
 Now both alight and go on foot, and lead the empty beast;  
 But then the people laugh, and say that one might ride at least.  
 The Old Man, seeing by no ways he could the people please,  
 Not blameless then, did drive the ass and drown him in the seas.  
 Thus, whilst we be, it will not be that any pleaseth all;  
 Else had been wanting, worthily, the noble Caesar's fall.

The end of Richard the Third, in the Sixth Book, (Chapter 26th) is given with much spirit:—

Now Richard heard that Richmond was assisted, and on shore,  
 And like unkennelled Cerberus the crooked tyrant swore,  
 And all complexions act at once confusedly in him;  
 He studieth, striketh, threats, entreats, and looketh mildly grim;  
 Mistrustfully he trusteth, and he dreadingly did dare,  
 And forty passions in a trice in him consort and square.  
 But when, by his convented force, his foes increased more,  
 He hastened battle, finding his corval apt therefore.  
 When Richmond orderly in all had battailed his aid,  
 Enringed by his complices, their cheerful leader said:—  
 Now is the time and place, sweet friends, and we the persons be  
 That must give England breath, or else unbreathe for her must we.  
 No tyranny is fabled, and no tyrant was indeed,  
 Worse than our foe, whose works will act my words if well he speed.

---

\* Perhaps a misprint for “doth.”

For ills<sup>b</sup> to ills superlative are easily enticed,  
But entertain amendment as the Gergesites did Christ.  
Be valiant then; he biddeth so that would not be outbid  
For courage, yet shall honour him, though base, that  
better did.

I am right heir Lancastrian, he in York's destroyed right  
Usurpeth; but, through either source,<sup>c</sup> for neither claim  
I fight,

But for our country's long-lacked weal, for England's  
peace, I war;

Wherein He speed us, unto whom I all events refar.

Meanwhile had furious Richard set his armies in array,  
And then, with looks even like himself, this or the like  
did say:—

Why, lads? shall yonder Welshman, with his stragglers,  
overmatch?

Disdain ye not such rivals, and defer ye their dispatch?  
Shall Tudor from Plantagenet the crown by craking  
snatch?

Know Richard's very thoughts (he touched the diadem  
he wore)

Be metal of this metal: then believe I love it more  
Than that for other law than life to supersede my claim;  
And lesser must not be his plea that counterpleads the  
same.

The weapons overtook his words, and blows they  
bravely change,  
When like a lion, thirsting blood, did moody Richard  
range,  
And made large slaughters where he went, till Richmond  
he espied,  
Whom singling, after doubtful swords, the valorous  
tyrant died.

Others of Shakspeare's historical or legendary subjects  
are also in 'Albion's England'; particularly the story  
of Lear, and that of Macbeth. In the former, which is

<sup>b</sup> Misprinted "ill."

<sup>c</sup> This is the only reading like sense we can make out of  
"through eithers ours," which is the nonsense of the edition  
before us.

in the Third Book (Chapter 14), the following fine lines occur :—

His aged eyes pour out their tears, when, holding up his hands,

He said, O God ! whoso thou art that my good hap withstands,

Prolong not life, defer not death ; my self I overlive  
When those that owe to me their lives to me my death would give.

Thou town, whose walls rose of my wealth, stand evermore to tell

Thy founder's fall, and warn that none do fall as Leir fell.

Bid none affy in friends ; for say, His children wrought his wrack ;

Yea, those that were to him most dear did loath and let him lack.

Cordella, well Cordella said, she loved as a child ;  
But sweeter words we seek than sooth, and so are men beguiled.

She only rests untried yet ; but what may I expect  
From her, to whom I nothing gave, when these do me reject ?

Then die : nay, try ; the rule may fail, and nature may ascend ;

Nor are they ever surest friends on whom we most do spend.

The three last Books, forming the continuation published in 1606, are occupied with the history of the Scots and Welsh ; and the story of Macbeth is told in the Fifteenth Book (Chapter 94). Shakspeare's witches (as they are commonly called) are here designated the "three fairies," and also "the weird-elves."

There are occasionally touches of true pathos in Warner, and one great merit which he has is, that his love of brevity generally prevents him from spoiling any stroke of this kind by multiplying words and images with

the view of heightening the effect, as many of his contemporaries are prone to do. His picture of Fair Rosamond in the hands of Queen Eleanor is very touching :—

Fair Rosamund, surprised thus ere thus she did expect,  
 Fell on her humble knees, and did her fearful hands erect :  
 She blushed out beauty, whilst the tears did wash her  
 pleasing face,  
 And begged pardon, meriting no less of common grace.  
 So far, forsooth, as in me lay, I did, quoth she, withstand ;  
 But what may not so great a king by means or force  
 command ?  
 And dar'st thou, minion, quoth the Queen, thus article to  
 me ?

\* \* \* \* \*

With that she dashed her on the lips, so dyed double red :  
 Hard was the heart that gave the blow ; soft were those  
 lips that bled.  
 Then forced she her to swallow down, prepared for that  
 intent,  
 A poisoned potion . . . . .

But we must also give an example or two of the eloquence of another kind with which the poem more abounds. Much of it is in the style of the following curious passage (from Book IX. Chap. 47) :—

The younger of these widows (for they both had thrice  
 been so)  
 Trots to the elder's cottage, hers but little distance fro :  
 There, cowering o'er two sticks across, burnt at a smokey  
 stock,  
 They chat how young men them in youth, and they did  
 young men mock ;  
 And how since threescore years ago (they aged foursoore  
 now)  
 Men, women, and the world were changed in all, they  
 knew not how.  
 When we were maids, quoth the one of them, was no such  
 new-found pride ;  
 Yet served I gentles, seeing store of dainty girls beside.

Then wore they shoes of ease; new of an inch broad,  
corked high:  
Black karsey stockings; worsted now; yea silk of youthful dye:  
Garters of lists; but now of silk, some edged deep with gold:  
With costlier toys—for coarser turns than used, perhaps,  
of old.  
Fringed and embroidered petticoats now beg: but heard  
you named,  
Till now of late, busks, periwigs, masks, plumes of  
feathers framed,  
Supporters, pooters,<sup>a</sup> fardingales above the loins to wear,

\* \* \* \* \*

Some wives, grey headed, shame not locks of youthful  
borrowed hair;  
Some, tiring art, attire their heads with only tresses bare.  
Some (grosser pride than which, think I, no passed age  
might shame)  
By art abusing nature, heads of antick't hair do frame.  
Once lacked each foresaid term,<sup>b</sup> because was lacking  
once the toy;  
And, lacked we all those toys and terms, it were no grief  
but joy:  
But, lawful were it some be such, should all alike be coy?  
Now dwells each drossel in her glass: when I was young,  
I wot,  
On holydays (for seldom else such idle times we got)  
A tub or pail of water clear stood us instead of glass,

\* \* \* \* \*

My parents they were wealthy, and myself in wanton  
youth  
Was fair enough, but proud enough; so fool enough in  
truth.  
I might have had good husbands, which my destiny  
withstood:  
Of three now dead (all grief is dry, gossip, this ale is  
good)

<sup>a</sup> Chalmers has "posters."

<sup>b</sup> Chalmers has "Once stanching lacked the term."

In faith not one of them was so ; for by this drink I swear  
(Requarrelling the cup) we—and her lips imparted were  
When the other beldam, great with chat (for talkative  
be cups)

The former's prate, not worth the while, thus fondly  
interrupts :—

When I, quoth she, the country left to be a London lass,  
I was not fairer than myself believed fair I was.

Good God ! how formal, prankt, and pert became I in a  
trice,

As if unto the place it were a nature to be nice :

And so the dialogue proceeds, though with more spirit  
than refinement, for a couple of pages farther. In another  
place (Book XIV. Chap. 91) a Lar, or Elf, is introduced  
inveighing against the decay of ancient manners, in the  
following strain :—

To farmers camé I, that at least their loaf and cheese  
once freed

For all would eat, but found themselves the parings now  
to need ;

So do their landlords rack their rents ; though in the  
manor place

Scarce smoked a chimney : yet did smoke perplex me in  
strange case.

I saw the chimneys cleared of fire, where ne'ertheless it  
smoked

So bitterly as one not used to like it might have choked.

But, when I saw it did proceed from nostrils and from  
throats

Of ladies, lords, and silly grooms, not burning skins nor  
coats,

Great Belsabub ! thought I, can all spit fire as well as thine ?  
Or where am I ? It cannot be under the torrid line.

My fellow Incubus . . . . .

Did put me by that fear, and said it was an Indian weed,  
That fumed away more wealth than would a many  
thousands feed.

Freed of that fear, the novelty of coaches scathed me so,  
As from their drifts and cluttering I knew not where to go.

These also work, quoth Incubus, to our avail, for why?  
 They tend to idle pride, and to inhospitality.  
 With that I, comforted, did then peep into every one,  
 And of my old acquaintances spied many a country Joan,  
 Whose fathers drove the dung-cart, though the daughters  
 now will none.

I knew when prelates and the peers had fair attend-  
 ance on

By gentlemen and yeomanry ; but that fair world is gone :  
 For most, like Jehu, hurry with pedanties two or three,  
 Yet all go down the wind, save those that hospitalious be.  
 Greatest ladies, with their women, on their palfreys  
 mounted fair,

Went through the streets, well waited on, their artless  
 faces bare,

Which now in coaches scorn to be saluted of the air.

I knew when men judicial rode on sober mules, whereby  
 They might of suitors, these and they, ask, answer, and  
 reply.

I knew when more was thrived abroad by war than now  
 by peace,

And English feared where they be frumpt since hostile  
 terms did cease :

But by occasion all things are produced, be, decrease.

Times were when Practice also preached, and well said  
 was well done ;

When courtiers cleared the old before they on the new  
 would run ;

When no judicial place was bought, lest justice might be  
 sold ;

When quirts nor quilletts overthrew or long did causes  
 hold ;

When lawyers more deserved their fees, and fatted less  
 with gold ;

When to the fifteenth Psalm sometimes had citizens  
 recourse ;

When Lords of farmers, farmers of the poor, had more  
 remorse ;

When poverty had patience more ; when none, as some  
 of late,

Illiterate, ridiculous, might on the altar wait ; &c.

Warner's most abusive invectives, however, in which

he exhausts the vocabulary of the kitchen and the streets, are directed against the old religion ; but we cannot afford room for any further specimens.

## DANIEL.

The great work of Samuel Daniel, who was born at Taunton, in Somersetshire, in 1562, and died in 1619, is his ' Civil Wars between the Two Houses of Lancaster and York,' in eight Books, the first four published in 1595, the fifth in 1599, the sixth in 1602, the two last in 1609 ; the preceding Books being always, we believe, republished along with the new edition. He is also the author of various minor poetical productions, of which the principal are a collection of fifty-seven Sonnets, entitled ' Delia,' his ' Musophilus, containing a General Defence of Learning,' some short epistles, and several tragedies and court masques. And he wrote, besides, in prose, a History of England, from the Conquest to the end of the reign of Edward III., as well as the Defence of Rhyme (in answer to Campion), which has been already mentioned. Very opposite judgments have been passed upon Daniel. Ben Jonson, in his conversations with Drummond, declared him to be no poet : Drummond, on the contrary, pronounces him " for sweetness of rhyming second to none." His style, both in prose and verse, has a remarkably modern air : if it were weeded of a few obsolete expressions, it would scarcely seem more antique than that of Waller, which is the most modern of the latter part of the seventeenth century. Bishop Kennet, who has republished Daniel's History, after telling us that the author had a place at Court in the reign of King James I.,

being groom of the privy chambers to the Queen, observes, that he “seems to have taken all the refinement a court could give him”; and probably the absence of pedantry in his style, and its easy and natural flow, are to be traced in great part to the circumstance of his having been a man of the world. His verse, too, always careful and exact, is in many passages more than smooth; even in his dramatic writings (which, having nothing dramatic about them except the form, have been held in very small estimation) it is frequently musical and sweet, though always artificial. The highest quality of his poetry is a tone of quiet, pensive reflection in which he is fond of indulging, and which often rises to dignity and eloquence, and has at times even something of depth and originality. Daniel's was the not uncommon fate of an attendant upon courts and the great; he is believed to have experienced some neglect from his royal patrons in his latter days, or at least to have been made jealous by Ben Jonson being employed to furnish part of the poetry for the court entertainments, the supply of which he used to have all to himself; upon which he retired to a life of quiet and contemplation in the country. It sounds strange in the present day to be told that his favourite retreat from the gaiety and bustle of London was a house which he rented in Old Street, St. Luke's. In his gardens here, we are informed by the writer of the Life prefixed to his collected poems, he would often indulge in entire solitude for many months, or at most receive the visits of only a few select friends. It is said to have been here that he composed most of his dramatic pieces. Towards the end of his life he retired to a farm which he had at Beckington, near Philip's Norton, in Somersetshire, and

his death took place there. "He was married," says the editor of his works, "but whether to the person he so often celebrates under the name of Delia, is uncertain." Fuller, in his Worthies, tells us that his wife's name was Justina. They had no children. Daniel is said to have been appointed to the honorary post of Poet Laureate after the death of Spenser.

In his narrative poetry Daniel is in general wire-drawn, flat, and feeble. He has no passion, and very little descriptive power. His 'Civil Wars' has certainly as little of martial animation in it as any poem in the language. There is abundance, indeed, of "the tranquil mind;" but of "the plumed troops," and the rest of "the pride, pomp, and circumstance of glorious war," Daniel seems, in composing this work (we had nearly written in this composing work) to have taken as complete a farewell as Othello himself. It is mostly a tissue of long-winded disquisition and cold and languid declamation, and has altogether more of the qualities of a good opiate than of a good poem. We will therefore take the few extracts for which we can make room from some of his other productions, where his vein of reflection is more in place, and also better in itself. His 'Musophilus' is perhaps upon the whole his finest piece. The poem, which is in the form of a dialogue between Philocosmus (a lover of the world) and Musophilus (a lover of the Muse), commences thus:—

*Philocosmus.*

Fond man, Musophilus, that thus dost spend  
 In an ungainful art thy dearest days,  
 Tiring thy wits, and toiling to no end  
 But to attain that idle smoke of praise !

Now, when this busy world cannot attend  
 The untimely music of neglected lays,  
 Other delights than these, other desires,  
 This wiser profit-seeking age requires.

*Musophilus.*

Friend Philocosmus, I confess indeed  
 I love this sacred art thou set'st so light :  
 And, though it never stand my life in stead,  
 It is enough it gives my self delight,  
 The whilst my unafflicted mind doth feed  
 On no unholy thoughts for benefit.

Be it that my unseasonable song  
 Come out of time, that fault is in the time ;  
 And I must not do virtue so much wrong  
 As love her aught the worse for others' crime ;  
 And yet I find some blessed spirits among  
 That cherish me, and like and grace my rhyme.

A gain that<sup>\*</sup> I do more in soul esteem  
 Than all the gain of dust the world doth crave ;  
 And, if I may attain but to redeem  
 My name from dissolution and the grave,  
 I shall have done enough ; and better deem  
 To have lived to *be* than to have died to *have*.

Short-breathed mortality would yet extend  
 That span of life so far forth as it may,  
 And rob her fate ; seek to beguile her end  
 Of some few lingering days of after-stay ;  
 That all this Little All might not descend  
 Into the dark an universal prey ;  
 And give our labours yet this poor delight  
 That, when our days do end, they are not done,  
 And, though we die, we shall not perish quite,  
 But live two lives where others have but one.

Further on in the dialogue Musophilus exclaims :—

So fares this humorous world, that ever-more,  
 Rapt with the current of a present course,

\* Erroneously printed in the edition before us (2 vols. 12mo. 1718) "Again, that."

Runs into that which lay contemned before ;  
 Then, glutted, leaves the same, and falls to a worse :  
 Now zeal holds all, no life but to adore ;  
 Then cold in spirit, and life is of no force.

Strait all that holy was unhallowed lies,  
 The scattered carcases of ruined vows ;  
 Then truth is false, and now hath blindness eyes ;  
 Then zeal trusts all, now scarcely what it knows ;  
 That evermore, to foolish or to wise,  
 It fatal is to be seduced with shows.

Sacred Religion ! Mother of Form and Fear !\*  
 How gorgeously sometimes dost thou sit decked !  
 What pompous vestures do we make thee wear !  
 What stately piles we prodigal erect !  
 How sweet perfumed thou art ! how shining clear !  
 How solemnly observed ! with what respect !

Another time, all plain; all quite threadbare,  
 Thou must have all within, and nought without ;  
 Sit poorly, without light, disrobed, no care :  
 Of outward grace, to amuse the poor devout ;  
 Powerless, unfollowed ; scarcely men can spare  
 The necessary rites to set thee out.

Either Truth, Goodness, Virtue are not still  
 The selfsame which they are, and always one,  
 But alter to the project of our will ;  
 Or we our actions make them wait upon,  
 Putting them in the livery of our skill,  
 And cast them off again when we have done.

Afterwards he replies very finely to an objection of Philocosmus to the cultivation of poetry, from the small number of those who really cared for it :—

And for the few that only lend their ear,  
 That few is all the world ; which with a few

---

\* This fine line has been adopted by Wordsworth, a reader and admirer of Daniel, in one of his sonnets on the Duddon.

Do ever live, and move, and work, and stir.  
 This is the heart doth feel, and only know ;  
 The rest, of all that only bodies bear,  
 Roll up and down, and fill up but the row ;  
 And serve as others' members, not their own,  
 The instruments of those that do direct.  
 Then, what disgrace is this, not to be known  
 To those knew not to give themselves respect ?  
 And, though they swell, with pomp of folly blown,  
 They live ungraceed, and die but in neglect.

And, for my part, if only one allow  
 The care my labouring spirits take in this,  
 He is to me a theatre large enow,  
 And his applause only sufficient is ;  
 All my respect is bent but to his brow ;  
 That is my all, and all I am is his.

And, if some worthy spirits be pleased too,  
 It shall more comfort breed, but not more will.  
 But what if none ? It cannot yet undo  
 The love I bear unto this holy skill :  
 This is the thing that I was born to do ;  
 This is my scene ; this part must I fulfil.

Our last extract shall be from his epistle to the Lady Margaret, Countess of Cumberland (the mother of Lady Anne Clifford, afterwards Countess of Pembroke, Dorset, and Montgomery, to whom Daniel had been tutor) :—

He that of such a height hath set his mind,  
 And reared the dwelling of the thoughts so strong,  
 As neither fear nor hope can shake the frame  
 Of his resolved powers ; nor all the wind  
 Of vanity or malice pierce to wrong.  
 His settled peace, or to disturb the same ;  
 What a fair seat hath he from whence he may  
 The boundless wastes and wealds of man survey !  
 And with how free an eye doth he look down  
 Upon these lower regions of turmoil !  
 Where all the storms of passions mainly beat  
 On flesh and blood ; where honour, power, renown

Are only gay affections, golden toil ;  
 Where greatness stands upon as feeble feet  
 As frailty doth, and only great doth seem  
 To little minds who do it so esteem.

\* \* \* \*

Thus, Madam, fares that man that hath prepared  
 A rest for his desires ; and sees all things  
 Beneath him ; and hath learned this Book of Man,  
 Full of the notes of frailty ; and compared  
 The best of Glory with her sufferings :  
 By whom, I see, you labour all you can  
 To plant your heart, and set your thoughts as near  
 His glorious mansion as your powers can bear.

Which, Madam, are so soundly fashioned  
 By that clear Judgment, that hath carried you  
 Beyond the feeble limits of your kind,  
 As they can stand against the strongest head  
 Passion can make ; inured to any hue  
 The world can cast ; that cannot cast that mind  
 Out of the form of goodness ; that doth see  
 Both what the best and worst of earth can be.

Which makes that, whatsoever here befals,  
 You in the region of your self remain,  
 Where no vain breath of the impudent molests ;  
 That lieth<sup>a</sup> secured within the brazen walls  
 Of a clear conscience ; that, without all stain,  
 Rises in peace, in innocence rests  
 Whilst all what malice from without procures  
 Shows her own ugly heart, but hurts not yours.

And, wheras none rejoice more in revenge  
 Than women use to do, yet you well know  
 That wrong is better checked by being contemned  
 Than being pursued ; leaving to Him to avenge  
 To whom it appertains. Wherein you show  
 How worthily your clearness hath condemned  
 Base Malediction, living in the dark,  
 That at the rays of Goodness still doth bark.

---

<sup>a</sup> This apparently must be the true word. The edition before us has "hath."

Knowing the heart of man is set to be  
 The centre of this world, about the which  
 These revolutions of disturbances  
 Still roll ; where all the aspects of misery  
 Predominate ; whose strong effects are such  
 As he must bear, being powerless to redress ;  
 And that, unless above himself he can  
 Erect himself, how poor a thing is man !

\*     \*     \*     \*

And this note, Madam, of your worthiness  
 Remains recorded in so many hearts,  
 As time nor malice cannot wrong your right  
 In the inheritance of fame you must possess :  
 You that have built you by your great deserts,  
 Out of small means, a far more exquisite  
 And glorious dwelling for your honoured name  
 Than all the gold of<sup>b</sup> leaden minds can frame.

## DRAYTON.

Michael Drayton, who is computed to have been born in 1563, and who died in 1631, is one of the most voluminous of our old poets ; being the author, besides many minor compositions, of three works of great length :—his ‘Barons’ Wars’ (on the subject of the civil wars of the reign of Edward II.) originally entitled ‘Mortimeriados,’ under which name it was published in 1596 ; his ‘England’s Heroical Epistles,’ 1598 ; and his ‘Polyolbion,’ the first eighteen Books of which appeared in 1612, and the whole, consisting of thirty Books, and extending to as many thousand lines, in 1622. This last is the work on which his fame principally rests. It is a most elaborate and minute topographical description of England,

<sup>b</sup> The text before us has “that,” which is nonsense.

written in Alexandrine rhymes ; and is a very remarkable work for the varied learning it displays, as well as for its poetic merits. The genius of Drayton is neither very imaginative nor very pathetic ; but he is an agreeable and weighty writer, with a sparkling, if not a very warm, fancy. From the height to which he occasionally ascends, as well as from his powers of keeping longer on the wing, he must be ranked, as he always has been, much before both Warner and Daniel. He has greatly more elevation than the former, and more true poetic life than the latter. His most graceful poetry, however, is perhaps to be found in some of his shorter pieces—in his 'Pastorals,' his very elegant and lively little poem entitled 'Nymphidia, or the Court of Fairy,' and his 'Verses on Poets and Poesy,' in which occur the lines on Marlow that have been quoted in a preceding page. From a mass of verse extending in all to not far from 100,000 lines, the few extracts that we can give must be far from affording a complete illustration of the author's genius. The following is from the commencement of the Thirteenth Book, or Song, of the 'Polyolbion,' the subject of which is the County of Warwick, of which Drayton, as he here tells us, was a native :—

Upon the mid-lands now the industrious muse doth fall ;  
 That shire which we the heart of England well may  
 call,  
 As she herself extends (the midst which is decreed)  
 Betwixt St. Michael's Mount and Berwick bordering  
 Tweed,  
 Brave Warwick, that abroad so long advanced her Bear,  
 By her illustrious Earls renowned every where ;  
 Above her neighbouring shires which always bore her  
 head.  
 My native country, then, which so brave spirits hast bred,

If there be virtues yet remaining in thy earth,  
 Or any good of thine thou bred'st into my birth,  
 Accept it as thine own, whilst now I sing of thee,  
 Of all thy later brood the unworthiest though I be.

\* \* \* \* \*

When Phebus lifts his head out of the water's<sup>a</sup> wave,  
 No sooner doth the earth her flowery bosom brave,  
 At such time as the year brings on the pleasant spring  
 But Hunt's up to the morn the feathered sylvans sing;  
 And, in the lower grove as on the rising knowl,  
 Upon the highest spray of every mounting pole  
 These quiristers are perched, with many a speckled  
 breast:

Then from her burnished gate the goodly glittering East  
 Gilds every mountain-top, which late the humorous night  
 Bespangled had with pearl, to please the morning's sight;  
 On which the mirthful quires, with their clear open  
 throats,

Unto the joyful morn so strain their warbling notes  
 That hills and valleys ring, and even the echoing air  
 Seems all composed of sounds about them every where.  
 The throstle with shrill sharps, as purposely he song  
 To awake the lustless sun, or chiding that so long  
 He was in coming forth that should the thickets thrill;  
 The woosel near at hand; that hath a golden bill,  
 As nature him had marked of purpose t' let us see  
 That from all other birds his tunes should different be:  
 For with their vocal sounds they sing to pleasant May;  
 Upon his dulcet pipe the merle doth only play.

When in the lower brake the nightingale hard by  
 In such lamenting strains the joyful hours doth ply  
 As though the other birds she to her tunes would draw  
 And, but that Nature, by her all-constraining law,  
 Each bird to her own kind this season doth invite,  
 They else, alone to hear that charmer of the night  
 (The more to use their ears) their voices sure would  
 spare,

That moduleth her notes so admirably rare  
 As man to set in parts at first had learned of her.  
 To Philomel the next the linnet we prefer;

<sup>a</sup> Or, perhaps, "watery." The common text gives "winter's."

And by that warbling bird the woodlark place we then,  
 The red-sparrow, the nope, the redbreast, and the wren ;  
 The yellow-pate, which, though she hurt the blooming tree,

Yet scarce hath any bird a finer pipe than she.

And, of these chanting fowls, the goldfinch not behind,  
 That hath so many sorts descending from her kind.

The tydy, for her notes as delicate as they ;

The laughing hecco ; then, the counterfeiting jay.

The softer with the shrill, some hid among the leaves,  
 Some in the taller trees, some in the lower greaves,

Thus sing away the morn, until the mounting sun

Through thick exhaled fogs his golden head hath run,  
 And through the twisted tops of our close covert creeps  
 To kiss the gentle shade, this while that sweetly sleeps.

And, near to these our thicks, the wild and frightful  
 herds,

Not hearing other noise but this of chattering birds,  
 Feed fairly on the lawns ; both sorts of seasoned deer :

Here walk the stately red, the freckled fallow there ;

The bucks and lusty stags amongst the rascals strewed,  
 As sometime gallant spirits amongst the multitude.

Of all the beasts which we for our venerial name

The hart among the rest, the hunter's noblest game.

Of which most princely chace sith none did e'er report,  
 Or by description touch to express that wondrous sport  
 (Yet might have well beseemed the ancients' noble songs)

To our old Arden here most fitly it belongs.

Yet shall she not invoke the Muses to her aid,

But thee, Diana bright, a goddess and a maid ;

In many a huge-grown wood, and many a shady grove

Which oft hast borne thy bow, Great Huntress, used to  
 rove,

At many a cruel beast, and with thy darts to pierce

The lion, panther, ounce, the bear, and tiger fierce ;

And, following thy fleet game, chaste mighty forest's  
 queen,

With thy dishevelled nymphs attired in youthful green,  
 About the lawns hast scoured, and wastes both far and

near,

Brave huntress ! But no beasts shall prove thy quarries here  
 Save those the best of chase, the tall and lusty red.

The stag, for goodly shape and stateliness of head,

Is fittest to hunt at force. For whom when, with his hounds,

The labouring hunter tufts the thick unbarbed grounds,  
Where harboured is the hart, there often from his feed  
The dogs of him do find ; or, thorough skilful heed,  
The huntsman by his shot, or breaking earth, perceives,  
Or entering of the thick by pressing of the greaves,  
Where he had gone to lodge. Now, when the hart doth hear

The often bellowing hounds to vent his secret leir,\*  
He rousing rusheth out, and through the brakes doth drive,  
As though up by the roots the bushes he would rive ;  
And, through the cumbrous thick as fearfully he makes,  
He with his branched head the tender saplings shakes,  
That, sprinkling their moist pearls, do seem for him to weep,

When after goes the cry, with yellings loud and deep,  
That all the forest rings, and every neighbouring place.  
And there is not a hound but falleth to the chace ;  
Rechating with his horn, which then the hunter cheers,  
Whilst still the lusty stag his high-palmed head upears,  
His body showing state, with unbent knees upright,  
Expressing, from all beasts, his courage in his flight.  
But when, the approaching foes still following, he perceives

That he his speed must trust, his usual walk he leaves,  
And o'er the champain flies ; which when the assembly find,

Each follows as his horse were footed with the wind.  
But, being then embost, the noble stately deer  
When he hath gotten ground (the kennel cast arear)  
Doth beat the brooks and ponds for sweet refreshing soil ;  
That serving not, then proves if he his scent can foil,  
And makes amongst the herds, and flocks of shag-wooll'd sheep,

Them frightening from the guard of those who had their keep ;

But, when as all his shifts his safety still denies,  
Put quite out of his walk, the ways and fallows tries.  
Whom when the ploughman meets, his team he letteth stand,

\* Lair.

To assail him with his goad ; so, with his hook in hand,  
 The shepherd him pursues, and to his dog doth hollo,  
 When, with tempestuous speed, the hounds and huntsmen  
 follow ;

Until the noble deer, through toil bereaved of strength,  
 His long and sinewy legs then failing him at length,  
 The villages attempts, enraged, not giving way  
 To any thing he meets now at his sad decay.  
 The cruel ravenous hounds and bloody hunters near,  
 This noblest beast of chace, that vainly doth not \* fear,  
 Some bank or quick-set finds ; to which his haunch op-  
 posed,

He turns upon his foes, that soon have him inclosed,  
 The churlish-throated hounds then holding him at bay ;  
 And, as their cruel fangs on his harsh skin they lay,  
 With his sharp-pointed head he dealeth deadly wounds.  
 The hunter, coming in to help his wearied hounds,  
 He desperately assails ; until, oppressed by force,  
 He, who the mourner is to his own dying corse,  
 Upon the ruthless earth his precious tears lets fall.

This passage, though long, will scarcely be felt to be tedious. It is one of the most animated descriptions in poetry. We add a short specimen of Drayton's lighter style from his *Nymphidia*—the account of the equipage of the Queen of the Fairies, when she set out to visit her lover Pigwiggen. The reader may compare it with Mercutio's description in *Romeo and Juliet* :—

Her chariot ready straight is made ;  
 Each thing therein is fitting laid,  
 That she by nothing might be stayed,  
 For nought must be her letting ;  
 Four nimble guests the horses were,  
 Their harnesses of gossamer,  
 Fly Cranon, her charioteer,  
 Upon the coach-box getting.

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\* "But" is the common reading.

Her chariot of a snail's fine shell,  
 Which for the colours did excel,  
 The fair Queen Mab becoming well,  
 So lively was the limning ;  
 The seat the soft wool of the bee,  
 The cover (gallantly to see)  
 The wing of a pied butterfly ;  
 I trow 't was simple trimming.

The wheels composed of cricket's bones,  
 And daintily made for the nonce ;  
 For fear of rattling on the stones  
 With thistle down they shod it ;  
 For all her maidens much did fear  
 If Oberon had chanced to hear  
 That Mab his queen should have been there,  
 He would not have abode it.

She mounts her chariot with a trice,  
 Nor would she stay for no advice  
 Until her maids, that were so nice,  
 To wait on her were fitted ;  
 But ran herself away alone ;  
 Which when they heard, there was not one  
 But hasted after to be gone,  
 As she had been diswitted.

Hop, and Mop, and Drab so clear,  
 Pip and Trip, and Skip, that were  
 To Mab their sovereign so dear,  
 Her special maids of honour ;  
 Fib, and Tib, and Pink, and Pin,  
 Tick, and Quick, and Jill, and Jin,  
 Tit, and Nit, and Wap, and Win,  
 The train that wait upon her.

Upon a grasshopper they got,  
 And, what with amble and with trot,  
 For hedge nor ditch they spared not,  
 But after her they hie them :  
 A cobweb over them they throw,  
 To shield the wind if it should blow ;  
 Themselves they wisely could bestow  
 Lest any should espy them.

## SYLVESTER.

One of the most popular poets of this date was Joshua Sylvester, the translator of *The Divine Weeks and Works*, and other productions, of the French poet Du Bartas. Sylvester has the honour of being supposed to have been one of the early favourites of Milton.\* In one of his publications he styles himself a Merchant-Adventurer, and he seems to have belonged to the Puritan party, which may have had some share in influencing Milton's regard. His translation of Du Bartas was first published in 1605; and the seventh edition (beyond which, we believe, its popularity did not carry it) appeared in 1641.† Nothing can be more uninspired than the general run of Joshua's verse, or more fantastic and absurd than the greater number of its more ambitious passages; for he had no taste or judgment, and, provided the stream of sound and the jingle of the rhyme were kept up, all was right in his notion. His poetry consists chiefly of translations from the French; but he is also the author of some original pieces, the title of one of which, a courtly offering from the poetical Puritan to the prejudices of King James, may be quoted as a lively specimen of his style and genius:—"Tobacco battered, and the pipes shattered, about their ears that idly idolize

\* Milton's obligations to Sylvester were first pointed out in 'Considerations on Milton's Early Reading, and the Prima Stamina of his *Paradise Lost*, together with Extracts from a Poet of the Sixteenth Century,' by the Rev. Charles Dunster. 1800.

† Ritson, in his 'Bibliographia Poetica,' makes the edition of 1613 to have been only the third; but it is called the fourth on the title-page.

so base and barbarous a weed, or at leastwise overlove so loathsome a vanity, by a volley of holy shot thundered from Mount Helicon.”\* But, with all his general flatness and frequent absurdity, Sylvester has an uncommon flow of harmonious words at times, and occasionally even some fine lines and felicitous expressions. His contemporaries called him the “Silver-tongued Sylvester,” for what they considered the sweetness of his versification—and some of his best passages justify the title. Indeed, even when the substance of what he writes approaches nearest to nonsense, the sound is often very graceful, soothing the ear with something like the swing and ring of Dryden’s heroics. But, after a few lines, is always sure to come in some ludicrous image or expression which destroys the effect of the whole. The translation of Du Bartas is inscribed to King James in a most adulatory and elaborate Dedication, consisting of a string of sonnet-shaped stanzas, ten in all, of which the two first are a very fair sample of the mingled good and bad of Sylvester’s poetry :—

“ To England’s, Scotland’s, France’, and Ireland’s king ;  
 Great Emperor of Europe’s greatest isles ;  
 Monarch of hearts, and arts, and everything  
 Beneath Bootes, many thousand miles ;  
 Upon whose head honour and fortune smiles ;  
 About whose brows clusters of crowns do spring ;  
 Whose faith him Champion of the Faith enstyles ;  
 Whose wisdom’s fame o’er all the world doth ring :  
 Mnemosyne and her fair daughters bring  
 The Daphnean crown to crown him laureate ;  
 Whole and sole sovereign of the Thespian spring,  
 Prince of Parnassus and Pierian state ;

And with their crown their kingdom's arms they yield,  
 Thrice three pens sunlike in a Cynthian field;  
 Signed by themselves and their High Treasurer  
 Bartas, the Great; engrossed by Sylvester.

“ Our sun did set, and yet no night ensued;  
 Our woeful loss so joyful gain did bring.  
 In tears we smile, amid our sighs we sing;  
 So suddenly our dying light renewed.  
 As when the Arabian only bird doth burn  
 Her aged body in sweet flames to death,  
 Out of her cinders a new bird hath breath,  
 In whom the beauties of the first return;  
 From spicy ashes of the sacred urn  
 Of our dead Phenix, dear Elizabeth,  
 A new true Phenix lively flourishest,  
 Whom greater glories than the first adorn.  
 So much, O King, thy sacred worth presume-I-on,  
 James, thou just heir of England's joyful un-i-on.”

It is not to be denied that there is considerable skill in versification here, and also some ingenious rhetoric; but, not to notice the pervading extravagance of the sentiment, some of the best-sounding of the lines and phrases have next to no meaning; and the close of each stanza, that of the last in particular, is in the manner of a ludicrous travesty. Many of Sylvester's conceits, however, belong to the original upon which he worked, and which upon the whole may be considered as fairly represented, perhaps occasionally improved, in his translation. Some passages are very melodiously given—the following, for instance, the commencement of which may put the reader in mind of Milton's “ Hail, holy light! offspring of heaven first-born!”

All hail pure lamp, bright, sacred, and excelling;  
 Sorrow and care, darkness and dread repelling;  
 Thou world's great taper, wicked men's just terror,  
 Mother of truth, true beauty's only mirror,

God's eldest daughter ; O ! how thou art full  
Of grace and goodness ! O ! how beautiful !

\* \* \* \* \*

But yet, because all pleasures wax unpleasant  
If without pause we still possess them present,  
And none can right discern the sweets of peace  
That have not felt war's irksome bitterness,  
And swans seem whiter if swart crows be by  
(For contraries each other best descry),  
The All's architect alternately decreed  
That Night the Day, the Day should Night succeed.

The Night, to temper Day's exceeding drought,  
Moistens our air, and makes our earth to sprout :  
The Night is she that all our travails eases,  
Buries our cares, and all our griefs appeases :  
The Night is she that, with her sable wing  
In gloomy darkness hushing every thing,  
Through all the world dumb silence doth distil,  
And wearied bones with quiet sleep doth fill.

Sweet Night ! without thee, without thee, alas !  
Our life were loathsome, even a hell, to pass ;  
For outward pains and inward passions still,  
With thousand deaths, would soul and body thrill.  
O Night, thou pullest the proud masque away  
Wherewith vain actors, in this world's great play,  
By day disguise them. For no difference  
Night makes between the peasant and the prince,  
The poor and rich, the prisoner and the judge,  
The foul and fair, the master and the drudge,  
The fool and wise, Barbarian and the Greek ;  
For Night's black mantle covers all alike.

He that, condemned for some notorious vice,  
Seeks in the mines the baits of avarice,  
Or, melting at the furnace, fineth bright  
Our soul's dire sulphur, resteth yet at night.  
He that, still stooping, tugs against the tide  
His laden barge amongst a river's side,  
And, filling shores with shouts, doth melt him quite,  
Upon his pallet resteth yet at night.  
He that in summer, in extremest heat  
Scorched all day, in his own scalding sweat,  
Shaves with keen scythe the glory and delight  
Of motley meadows, resteth yet at night,

And in the arms of his dear pheer forgoes  
 All former troubles and all former woes.  
 Only the learned Sisters' sacred minions,  
 While silent Night under her sable pinions  
 Folds all the world, with painless pain they tread  
 A sacred path that to the heavens doth lead;  
 And higher than the heavens their readers raise  
 Upon the wings of their immortal lays.

## CHAPMAN'S HOMER.

Of the translators from the ancients in this age, by far the greatest is Chapman. George Chapman was born at Hitching Hill, in the county of Hertford, in 1557, and lived till 1634. Besides his plays, which will be afterwards noticed, he is the author of several original poetical pieces; but he is best and most favourably known by his versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. "He would have made a great epic poet," Charles Lamb has said, in his 'Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets,' turning to these works after having characterised his dramas, "if, indeed, he has not abundantly shown himself to be one; for his Homer is not so properly a translation as the stories of Achilles and Ulysses re-written. The earnestness and passion which he has put into every part of these poems would be incredible to a reader of mere modern translations. His almost Greek zeal for the honour of his heroes is only paralleled by that fierce spirit of Hebrew bigotry with which Milton, as if personating one of the zealots of the old law, clothed himself when he sat down to paint the acts of Samson against the uncircumcised. The great obstacle to Chapman's translations being read is their unconquerable quaintness. He pours out in the same breath the most just and natural

and the most violent and forced expressions. He seems to grasp whatever words come first to hand during the impetus of inspiration, as if all other must be inadequate to the divine meaning. But passion (the all in all in poetry) is everywhere present, raising the low, dignifying the mean, and putting sense into the absurd. He makes his readers glow, weep, tremble, take any affection which he pleases, be moved by words, or in spite of them, be disgusted and overcome that disgust." Chapman's Homer is worthy of this fine tribute. Few writers have been more copiously inspired with the genuine frenzy of poetry—with that "fine madness," which, as Dryden has said of his lines on Marlow, "rightly should possess a poet's brain." Indeed, in the character of his genius, out of the province of the drama, Chapman bears a considerable resemblance to Marlow, whose unfinished translation of Musæus's *Hero and Leander* he completed. With more judgment and more care he might have given to his native language, in his version of the *Iliad*, one of the very greatest of the poetical works it possesses. But what, except the most extreme irregularity and inequality,—a rough sketch rather than a finished performance,—was to be expected from his boast of having translated half the poem—namely, the last twelve books—in fifteen weeks? Yet, rude and negligent upon the whole as it is, Chapman's is by far the most Homeric *Iliad* we yet possess. The enthusiasm of the translator for his original is uncompromising to a degree of the ludicrous. "Of all books," he exclaims in his Preface, "extant in all kinds, Homer is the first and best;" and in the same spirit, in quoting a passage from Pliny's *Natural History* in another portion of his preliminary matter, he proceeds first to

turn it into verse, “that no prose may come near Homer.” In spite, however, of all this eccentricity, and of a hurry and impetuosity which betray him into many mistranslations, and, on the whole, have the effect perhaps of giving a somewhat too tumultuous and stormy representation of the Homeric poetry, the English into which Chapman transfuses the meaning of the mighty ancient is often singularly and delicately beautiful. He is the author of nearly all the happiest of the compound epithets which Pope has adopted, and of many others equally musical and expressive. “Far-shooting Phœbus,”—“the ever-living gods,”—“the many-headed hill,”—“the ivory-wristed queen,”—are a few of the felicitous combinations with which he has enriched his native tongue. Carelessly executed, indeed, as the work for the most part is, there is scarcely a page of it that is not irradiated by gleams of the truest poetic genius. Often in the midst of a long paragraph of the most chaotic versification, the fatigued and distressed ear is surprised by a few lines,—or it may be sometimes only a single line,—“musical as is Apollo’s lute,”—and sweet and graceful enough to compensate for ten times as much ruggedness. Such, for instance, is the following version of part of the description of the visit paid by Ulysses and his companions to the shrine of Apollo at Chrysa, in the First Book:—

— The youths crowned cups of wine  
 Drank off, and filled again to all: that day was held divine,  
 And spent in pæans to the Sun; who heard with pleased  
 ear:  
 When whose bright chariot stooped to sea, and twilight  
 hid the clear,  
 All soundly on their cables slept, even till the night was  
 worn;  
 And when the Lady of the Light, the rosy-fingered morn,

Rose from the hills, all fresh arose, and to the camp retired,  
 While Phœbus with a fore-right wind their swelling bark inspired.

And here are a few more verses steeped in the same liquid beauty, from the Catalogue of the Ships, in the Second Book :—

Who dwell in Pylos' sandy soil and Arene \* the fair.  
 In Thryon near Alpheus' flood, and Aepy full of air,  
 In Cyparysseus, Amphygen, and little Pteleon,  
 The town where all the Eleots dwell, and famous Doreon ;  
 Where all the Muses, opposite, in strife of poesy,  
 To ancient Thamyris of Thrace, did use him cruelly :  
 He coming from Eurytus† court, the wise Oeschalian king,  
 Because he proudly durst affirm he could more sweetly sing

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\* This name is incorrectly accented, but Pope has copied the error. Warton had a copy of Chapman's translation, which had belonged to Pope, and in which the latter had noted many of the interpolations of his predecessor, of whom, indeed, as Warton remarks, a diligent observer will easily discern that he was no careless reader.—*Hist. Eng. Poet.* iv. 272. In the preface to his own Iliad Pope has allowed to Chapman “a daring fiery spirit that animates his translation, which is something like what one might imagine Homer himself might have writ before he arrived to years of discretion.” Dryden has told us also that Waller used to say he never could read it without inereditable transport. In a note upon Warton by the late Mr. Park it is stated that “Chapman's own copy of his translation of Homer, corrected by him throughout for a future edition, was purchased for five shillings from the shop of Edwards by Mr. Steevens, and, at the sale of his books in 1800, was transferred to the invaluable library of Mr. Heber.” Chapman's Iliad in a complete form was first printed without date, but certainly after the accession of James I., to whose son, Prince Henry, it is dedicated. The Odyssey, which is in the common heroic verse of ten syllables, was published in 1614.

† This name is also misaccented.

Than that Pierian race of Jove, they, angry with his vaunt,  
 Bereft his eyesight and his song, that did the ear enchant,  
 And of his skill to touch his harp disfurnished his hand :  
 All these, in ninety hollow keels, grave Nestor did command.

Almost the whole of this Second Book, indeed, is admirably translated : in the harangues, particularly, of Agamemnon and the other generals, in the earlier part of it, all the fire of Homer burns and blazes in English verse.\*

HARINGTON.—FAIRFAX.—FANSHAWE.

Of the translators of foreign poetry which belong to this period three are very eminent. Sir John Harington's translation of the *Orlando Furioso* first appeared in 1591, when the author was in his thirtieth year. It does not convey all the glow and poetry of Ariosto ; but it is, nevertheless, a performance of great ingenuity and talent. The translation of Tasso's great epic by Edward Fairfax was first published, under the title of 'Godfrey of Bulloigne, or the Recoverie of Jerusalem,' in 1600. This is a work of true genius, full of passages of great beauty ; and, although by no means a perfectly exact or servile version of the Italian original, is throughout executed with as much care as taste and spirit.† Sir Richard Fanshawe is the author of versions of Camoens's *Lusiad*, of Guarini's *Pastor Fido*, of the Fourth Book of the *Æneid*, of the 'Odes of Horace, and of the 'Querer

\* Chapman's Translation of the *Iliad*, formerly a scarce book, has now been rendered generally accessible by the late beautiful reprint of it edited by Dr. W. Cooke Taylor, 2 vols. 8vo. 1843.

† Reprinted in the Tenth and Fourteenth Volumes of KNIGHT's WEEKLY VOLUME.

por Solo Querer' (To love for love's sake), of the Spanish dramatist Mendoza. Some passages from the last-mentioned work, which was published in 1649, may be found in 'Lamb's Specimens,'\* the ease and flowing gaiety of which never have been excelled even in original writing. The Pastor Fido is also rendered with much spirit and elegance. Fanshawe is, besides, the author of a Latin translation of Fletcher's Faithful Shepherdess, and of some original poetry. His genius, however, was sprightly and elegant rather than lofty, and perhaps he does not succeed so well in translating poetry of a more serious style: at least Mickle, the modern translator of Camoens, in the discourse prefixed to his own version, speaks with great contempt of that of his predecessor; affirming not only that it is exceedingly unfaithful, but that Fanshawe had not "the least idea of the dignity of the epic style, or of the true spirit of poetical translation." He seems also to sneer at Fanshawe's Lusiad because it was "published during the usurpation of Cromwell,"—as if even the poets and translators of that time must have been a sort of illegitimates and usurpers in their way. But Fanshawe was all his life a steady royalist, and served both Charles I. and his son in a succession of high employments. Mickle, in truth, was not the man to appreciate either Fanshawe or Cromwell.

## DRUMMOND.

One of the most graceful poetical writers of the reign of James I. is William Drummond, of Hawthornden, near Edinburgh; and he is further deserving of notice as the first of his countrymen, at least of any eminence, who

\* Vol. ii. pp. 242—253.

aspired to write in English. He has left us a quantity of prose as well as verse ; the former very much resembling the style of Sir Philip Sidney in his *Arcadia*,—the latter, in manner and spirit, formed more upon the model of Surrey, or rather upon that of Petrarch and the other Italian poets whom Surrey and many of his English successors imitated. No early English imitator of the Italian poetry, however, has excelled Drummond, either in the sustained melody of his verse, or its rich vein of thoughtful tenderness. We will transcribe one of his sonnets as a specimen of the fine moral painting, tinged with the colouring of scholarly recollections, in which he delights to indulge :—

Trust not, sweet soul, those curled waves of gold  
 With gentle tides that on your temples flow,  
 Nor temples spread with flakes of virgin snow,  
 Nor snow of cheeks with Tyrian grain enrolled.  
 Trust not those shining lights which wrought my woe  
 When first I did their azure rays behold,  
 Nor voice whose sounds more strange effects do show  
 Than of the Thracian harper have been told ;  
 Look to this dying lily, fading rose,  
 Dark hyacinth, of late whose blushing beams  
 Made all the neighbouring herbs and grass rejoice,  
 And think how little is 'twixt life's extremes :  
 The cruel tyrant that did kill those flowers  
 Shall once, ay me, not spare that spring of yours.

#### DAVIES.

A remarkable poem of this age, first published in 1599, is the ‘*Nosce Teipsum*\* of Sir John Davies, who was successively solicitor and attorney general in the reign of James, and had been appointed to the place of Chief Jus-

\* The full title is ‘*Nosce Teipsum*. This oracle expounded in two elegies :—1. Of human knowledge.—2. Of the soul of man and the immortality thereof.’

tice of the King's Bench, when he died, before he could enter upon its duties, in 1626. Davies is also the author of a poem on dancing entitled 'Orchestra,' and of some minor pieces, all distinguished by vivacity as well as precision of style ; but he is only now remembered for his philosophical poem, the earliest of the kind in the language. It is written in rhyme, in the common heroic ten-syllable verse, but disposed in quatrains, like the early play of Misogonus already mentioned, and other poetry of the same era, or like Sir Thomas Overbury's poem of *The Wife*, the *Gondibert* of Sir William Davenant, and the *Annus Mirabilis* of Dryden, at a later period. No one of these writers has managed this difficult stanza so successfully as Davies : it has the disadvantage of requiring the sense to be in general closed at certain regularly and quickly recurring turns, which yet are very ill adapted for an effective pause ; and even all the skill of Dryden has been unable to free it from a certain air of monotony and languor,—a circumstance of which that poet may be supposed to have been himself sensible, since he wholly abandoned it after one or two early attempts. Davies, however, has conquered its difficulties ; and, as has been observed, " perhaps no language can produce a poem, extending to so great a length, of more condensation of thought, or in which fewer languid verses will be found."\* In fact, it is by this condensation and sententious brevity, so carefully filed and elaborated, however, as to involve no sacrifice of perspicuity or fulness of expression, that he has attained his end. Every quatrain is a pointed expression of a separate thought, like one of *Rocheſſoucault's Maxims* ; each thought being, by great skill and

\* Hallam, *Lit. of Europe*, ii. 314

painstaking in the packing, made exactly to fit and to fill the same case. It may be doubted, however, whether Davies would not have produced a still better poem if he had chosen a measure which would have allowed him greater freedom and real variety ; unless, indeed, his poetical talent was of a sort that required the suggestive aid and guidance of such artificial restraints as he had to cope with in this, and what would have been a bondage to a more fiery and teeming imagination was rather a support to his. He wrote, among other things, a number of acrostics upon the name of Queen Elizabeth ; which, says Ellis, "are probably the best acrostics ever written, and all equally good ; but they seem to prove that their author was too fond of struggling with useless difficulties."\* Perhaps he found the limitations of the acrostic, too, a help rather than a hindrance.

#### DONNE.

The title of the metaphysical school of poetry, which in one sense of the words might have been given to Davies and his imitators, has been conferred by Dryden upon another race of writers, whose founder was a contemporary of Davies, the famous Dr. John Donne, Dean of St. Paul's. Donne, who died at the age of fifty-eight, in 1631, is said to have written most of his poetry before the end of the sixteenth century, but none of it was published till late in the reign of James. It consists of lyrical pieces (entitled *Songs* and *Sonnets*) epithalamions or marriage songs, funeral and other elegies, satires, epistles, and divine poems. On a superficial inspection, Donne's verses look like so many riddles. They seem to be writ-

\* Spec. of Early Eng. Poets, ii. 370

ten upon the principle of making the meaning as difficult to be found out as possible—of using all the resources of language, not to express thought, but to conceal it. Nothing is said in a direct, natural manner ; conceit follows conceit without intermission ; the most remote analogies, the most far-fetched images, the most unexpected turns, one after another, surprise and often puzzle the understanding ; while things of the most opposite kinds—the harsh and the harmonious, the graceful and the grotesque, the grave and the gay, the pious and the profane—meet and mingle in the strangest of dances. But, running through all this bewilderment, a deeper insight detects not only a vein of the most exuberant wit, but often the sunniest and most delicate fancy, and the truest tenderness and depth of feeling. Donne, though in the latter part of his life he became a very serious and devout poet as well as man, began by writing amatory lyrics, the strain of which is anything rather than devout ; and in this kind of writing he seems to have formed his poetic style, which, for such compositions, would, to a mind like his, be the most natural and expressive of any. The species of lunacy which quickens and exalts the imagination of a lover, would, in one of so seething a brain as he was, strive to expend itself in all sorts of novel and wayward combinations, just as Shakspeare has made it do in his Romeo and Juliet, whose rich intoxication of spirit he has by nothing else set so livingly before us, as by making them thus exhaust all their eccentricities of language in their struggle to give expression to that inexpressible passion which had taken captive the whole heart and being of both. Donne's later poetry, in addition to the same abundance and originality of thought, often run-

ning into a wildness and extravagance not so excusable here as in his erotic verses, is famous for the singular movement of the versification, which has been usually described as the extreme degree of the rugged and tuneless. Pope has given us a translation of his four Satires into modern language, which he calls 'The Satires of Dr. Donne Versified.' Their harshness, as contrasted with the music of his lyrics, has also been referred to as proving that the English language, at the time when Donne wrote, had not been brought to a sufficiently advanced state for the writing of heroic verse in perfection.\* That this last notion is wholly unfounded, numerous examples sufficiently testify: not to speak of the blank verse of the dramatists, the rhymed heroics of Shakspeare, of Fletcher, of Jonson, of Spenser, and of other writers contemporary with and of earlier date than Donne, are, for the most part, as perfectly smooth and regular as any that have since been written; at all events, whatever irregularity may be detected in them, if they be tested by Pope's narrow gamut, is clearly not to be imputed to any immaturity in the language. These writers evidently preferred and cultivated, deliberately and on principle, a wider compass, and freer and more varied flow, of melody than Pope had a taste or an ear for. Nor can it be questioned, we think, that the peculiar construction of Donne's verse in his satires and many of his other later poems was also adopted by choice and on system. His lines, though they will not suit the see-saw style of reading verse,—to which he probably intended that they should be invincibly impracticable,—are not without a deep and subtle music of their own, in which the cadences respond to the

\* See article on Donne in Penny Cyclopaedia, vol. ix. p. 85.

sentiment, when enunciated with a true feeling of all that they convey. They are not smooth or luscious verses, certainly ; nor is it contended that the endeavour to raise them to as vigorous and impressive a tone as possible, by depriving them of all over-sweetness or liquidity, has not been carried too far ; but we cannot doubt that whatever harshness they have was designedly given to them, and was conceived to infuse into them an essential part of their relish.

Here is one of Donne's Songs :—

Sweetest love, I do not go  
 For weariness of thee,  
 Nor in hope the world can show  
 A fitter love for me ;  
 But since that I  
 Must die at last, 'tis best  
 Thus to use myself in jest  
 By feigned death to die.

Yesternight the sun went hence,  
 And yet is here to-day ;  
 He hath no desire nor sense,  
 Nor half so short a way :  
 Then fear not me,  
 But believe that I shall make  
 Hastier journeys, since I take  
 More wings and spurs than he.

O how feeble is man's power !  
 That, if good fortune fall,  
 Cannot add another hour,  
 Nor a lost hour recall.  
 But come bad chance,  
 And we join to it our strength,  
 And we teach it art and length  
 Itself o'er us to advance.

When thou sigh'st thou sigh'st not wind,  
 But sigh'st my soul away ;  
 When thou weep'st, unkindly kind,  
 My life's blood doth decay.

It cannot be  
 That thou lov'st me as thou say'st,  
 If in thine my life thou waste,  
 Which art the life of me.

Let not thy divining heart  
 Forethink me any ill ;  
 Destiny may take thy part  
 And may thy fears fulfil ;  
 But think that we  
 Are but laid aside to sleep :  
 They who one another keep  
 Alive ne'er parted be.

Somewhat fantastic as this may be thought, it is surely, notwithstanding, full of feeling ; and nothing can be more delicate than the execution. Nor is it possible that the writer of such verses can have wanted an ear for melody, however capriciously he may have sometimes experimented upon language, in the effort, as we conceive, to bring a deeper, more expressive music out of it than it would readily yield. We add one of his elegies as a specimen of his more elaborate style :—

Language, thou art too narrow and too weak  
 To ease us now ; great sorrows cannot speak.  
 If we could sigh our accents, and weep words,  
 Grief wears, and lessens, that tears breath affords.  
 Sad hearts, the less they seem, the more they are ;  
 So guiltiest men stand mutest at the bar ;  
 Not that they know not, feel not their estate,  
 But extreme sense hath made them desperate.  
 Sorrow ! to whom we owe all that we be,  
 Tyrant in the fifth and greatest monarchy,  
 Was 't that she did possess all hearts before  
 Thou hast killed her, to make thy empire more ?  
 Knew'st thou some would, that knew her not, lament,  
 As in a deluge perish the innocent ?  
 Was 't not enough to have that palace won,  
 But thou must raze it too, that was undone ?  
 Had'st thou stay'd there, and looked out at her eyes,  
 All had adored thee, that now from thee flies ;

For they let out more light than they took in ;  
 They told not when, but did the day begin.  
 She was too sapphirine and clear for thee ;  
 Clay, flint, and jet now thy fit dwellings be.  
 Alas, she was too pure, but not too weak ;  
 Whoe'er saw crystal ordnance but would break ?  
 And, if we be thy conquest, by her fall  
 Thou hast lost thy end ; in her we perish all :  
 Or, if we live, we live but to rebel,  
 That know her better now, who knew her well.  
 If we should vapour out, and pine and die,  
 Since she first went, that were not misery ;  
 She changed our world with hers ; now she is gone,  
 Mirth and prosperity is oppression.  
 For of all moral virtues she was all  
 That ethics speak of virtues cardinal :  
 Her soul was Paradise ; the cherubin  
 Set to keep it was grace, that kept out sin :  
 She had no more than let in death, for we  
 All reap consumption from one fruitful tree.  
 God took her hence lest some of us should love  
 Her, like that plant, him and his laws above ;  
 And, when we tears, he mercy shed in this,  
 To raise our minds to heaven, where now she is ;  
 Who, if her virtues would have let her stay,  
 We had had a saint, have now a holiday.  
 Her heart was that strange bush, where sacred fire,  
 Religion, did not consume, but inspire  
 Such piety, so chaste use of God's day,  
 That what we turn to feast she turned to pray,  
 And did prefigure here, in devout taste,  
 The rest of her high Sabbath, which shall last.  
 Angels did hand her up, who next God dwell.  
 For she was of that order whence most fell.  
 Her body 's left with us, lest some had said  
 She could not die, except they saw her dead ;  
 For from less virtue, and less beauteousness,  
 The Gentiles framed them Gods and Goddesses.  
 The ravenous earth that now woos her to be  
 Earth too will be a Lemnia ;\* and the tree

\* The earth of the isle of Lemnos was supposed by the ancients to be medicinal.

That wraps that crystal in a wooden round \*  
 Shall be took up spruce filled with diamond.  
 And we, her sad glad friends, all bear a part  
 Of grief, for all would break a Stoic's heart.

## SHAKSPEARE'S MINOR POEMS.

In the long list of the minor names of the Elizabethan poetry appears the bright name of William Shakspeare. Shakspeare published his 'Venus and Adonis' in 1593, and his 'Tarquin and Lucrece' in 1594; his 'Passionate Pilgrim' did not appear till 1599; the 'Sonnets' not till 1609. It is probable, however, that the first-mentioned of these pieces, which, in his dedication of it to the Earl of Southampton, he calls the first heir of his invention, was written some years before its publication; and, although the 'Tarquin and Lucrece' may have been published immediately after it was composed, it, too, may be accounted an early production. We have no positive evidence that any wholly original drama, such as would be considered a work of invention, had yet been produced by Shakspeare; and, notwithstanding the force of some of the reasons which have been lately urged † for carrying back some of his original plays to a date preceding the year 1593, we are still inclined to think it probable that all the other poetry we have of Shakspeare's was composed at least before he had fairly given himself up to dramatic poetry, or had done anything in that line to which he

\* We have ventured to introduce this word instead of "Tomb," which is the reading in the edition before us (Poems, &c., 8vo. Lond. 1669), and which cannot possibly be right.

† Both by Mr. Knight and by Mr. Collier.

could properly set his name, or by which he could hope that he would live and be remembered among the poets of his country. But, although this minor poetry of Shakspeare sounds throughout like the utterance of that spirit of highest invention and sweetest song before it had found its proper theme, much is here also, immature as it may be, that is still all Shakspearian—the vivid conception, the inexhaustible fertility and richness of thought and imagery, the glowing passion, the gentleness withal that is ever of the poetry as it was of the man, the enamoured sense of beauty, the living words, the ear-delighting and heart-enthralling music; nay, even the dramatic instinct itself, and the idea at least, if not always the realization, of that sentiment of all subordinating and consummating art of which his dramas are the most wonderful exemplification in literature.\* We now proceed to resume the history of that dramatic poetry which is the chief glory of the Elizabethan age of our literature with a notice of these productions, which are its chief glory.

#### SHAKSPEARE'S DRAMATIC WORKS.

William Shakspeare, born in 1564, is enumerated as one of the proprietors of the Blackfriars Theatre in 1589; is sneered at by Robert Greene in 1592, in terms which seem to imply that he had already acquired a considerable reputation as a dramatist and a writer in blank verse, though the satirist insinuates that he was enabled

\* But see the considerations stated by Mr. Knight in his editions of the Poems of Shakspeare for holding that the *Tarquin and Lucrece* is a composition of seven, or eight years' later date than the *Venus and Adonis*.

to make the show he did chiefly by the plunder of his predecessors;\* and in 1598 is spoken of by a critic of the day as indisputably the greatest of English dramatists, both for tragedy and comedy, and as having already produced his Two Gentlemen of Verona, Comedy of Errors, Love's Labours Lost, Love's Labours Won (generally supposed to be All's Well that Ends Well, although it has lately been contended that it must be the Tempest†), Midsummer Night's Dream, Merchant of Venice, Richard II., Richard III., Henry IV., King John, Titus Andronicus, and Romeo and Juliet.‡ There is no ground, however, for feeling assured, and, indeed, it is rather improbable, that we have here a complete catalogue of the plays written by Shakspeare up to this date; nor is the authority of so evidently loose a statement, embodying, it is to be supposed, the mere report of the town, sufficient even to establish absolutely the authenticity of every one of the plays enumerated. It is very possible, for example, that Meres may be mistaken in assigning Titus Andronicus to Shakspeare; and, on the other hand, he may be the author of Pericles, and may have already written that play and some others, although

\* "There is an upstart crow, beautified with our feathers, that, with his tiger's heart wrapt in a player's hide, supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you; and, being an absolute *Johannes Factotum*, is, in his own conceit, the only *Shake-scene* in a country."—*Greene's Groatsworth of Wit*, 1592.

† By the Rev. Joseph Hunter, in the 'Second Part of New Illustrations of the Life, Studies, and Writings of Shakespeare,' 8vo. Lond. 1844; and previously in a 'Disquisition on the Tempest,' separately published.

‡ *Palladis Tamia; Wit's Treasury. Being the Second Part of Wit's Commonwealth.* By Francis Meres. 1598. p. 282.

Meres does not mention them. The only other direct or positive information we possess on this subject is, that a 'History' called *Titus Andronicus*, presumed to be the play afterwards published as Shakspeare's, was entered for publication at Stationers' Hall in 1593; that the Second Part of *Henry VI.* (if it is by Shakspeare) in its original form of 'The First Part of the Contention betwixt the Two Famous Houses of York and Lancaster,' was published in 1594; the Third Part of *Henry VI.* (if by Shakspeare), in its original form of 'The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York,' in 1595; his *Richard II.*, *Richard III.*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, in 1597; *Love's Labours Lost* and the First Part of *Henry IV.* in 1598 (the latter, however, having been entered at Stationers' Hall the preceding year); a "corrected and augmented" edition of *Romeo and Juliet* in 1599; *Titus Andronicus* (supposing it to be Shakspeare's), the Second Part of *Henry IV.*, *Henry V.*, in its original form, the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and the *Merchant of Venice*, in 1600 (the last having been entered at Stationers' Hall in 1598); the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, in its original form, in 1602 (but entered at Stationers' Hall the year before\*); *Hamlet* in 1603 (entered likewise the year before); a second edition of *Hamlet*, "enlarged to almost as much again as it was, according to the true and perfect copy," in 1604; *Lear* in 1608, and *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Pericles*, in 1609 (each being entered the preceding year); *Othello* not till 1622, six years after the author's death; and all

\* This first sketch of the *Merry Wives of Windsor* has been reprinted for the Shakespeare Society, under the care of J. G. Halliwell, Esq., 1842.

the other plays, namely, the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the *Winter's Tale*, the *Comedy of Errors*, *King John*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *As You Like It*, *King Henry VIII.*, *Measure for Measure*, *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, the *Taming of the Shrew*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, *Timon of Athens*, the *Tempest*, *Twelfth Night*, the *First Part of Henry VI.* (if Shakspeare had anything to do with that play\*), and also the perfect editions of *Henry V.*, the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and the *Second and Third Parts of Henry VI.*, not, as far as is known, till they appear, along with those formerly printed, in the first folio, in 1623.

Such then is the sum of the treasure that Shakspeare has left us; but the revolution which his genius wrought upon our national drama is placed in the clearest light by comparing his earliest plays with the best which the language possessed before his time. He has made all his predecessors obsolete. While his *Merchant of Venice*, and his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and his *Romeo and Juliet*, and his *King John*, and his *Richard II.*, and his *Henry IV.*, and his *Richard III.*, all certainly produced, as we have seen, before the year 1598, are still the most universally familiar compositions in our literature, no other dramatic work that had then been written is now popularly read, or familiar to anybody except to a few

\* See upon this question Mr. Knight's 'Essay upon the Three Parts of King Henry VI., and King Richard III.,' in the Seventh Volume of his Library Edition of Shakspere, pp. 1—119. And see also Mr. Halliwell's Introduction to the reprint of 'The First Sketches of the Second and Third Parts of King Henry the Sixth' (the First Part of the Contention and the True Tragedy), edited by him for the Shakespeare Society, 1843.

professed investigators of the antiquities of our poetry. Where are now the best productions even of such writers as Greene, and Peele, and Marlow, and Decker, and Marston, and Webster, and Thomas Heywood, and Middleton? They are to be found among our 'Select Collections of Old Plays,'—publications intended rather for the mere preservation of the pieces contained in them, than for their diffusion among a multitude of readers. Or, if the entire works of a few of these elder dramatists have recently been collected and republished, this has still been done only to meet the demand of a comparatively very small number of curious students, anxious to possess and examine for themselves whatever relics are still recoverable of the old world of our literature. Popularly known and read the works of these writers never again will be; there is no more prospect or probability of this than there is that the plays of Shakspeare will ever lose their popularity among his countrymen. In that sense, everlasting oblivion is their portion, as everlasting life is his. In one form only have they any chance of again attracting some measure of the general attention—namely, in the form of such partial and very limited exhibition as Lamb has given us an example of in his 'Specimens.' And herein we see the first great difference between the plays of Shakspeare and those of his predecessors, and one of the most immediately conspicuous of the improvements which he introduced into dramatic writing. He did not create our regular drama, but he regenerated and wholly transformed it, as if by breathing into it a new soul. We possess no dramatic production anterior to his appearance that is at once a work of high genius and of anything like equally sus-

tained power throughout. Wonderful bursts of poetry there are in many of the pieces of our earlier dramatists ; but the higher they soar in one scene, the lower they generally seem to think it expedient to sink in the next. Their great efforts are made only by fits and starts : for the most part it must be confessed that the best of them are either merely extravagant and absurd, or do nothing but trifle or dose away over their task with the expenditure of hardly any kind of faculty at all. This may have arisen in part from their own want of judgment or want of painstaking, in part from the demands of a very rude condition of the popular taste ; but the effect is to invest all that they have bequeathed to us with an air of barbarism, and to tempt us to take their finest displays of successful daring for mere capricious inspirations, resembling the sudden impulses of fury by which the listless and indolent man of the woods will sometimes be roused for the instant from his habitual laziness and passiveness to an exhibition of superhuman strength and activity. From this savage or savage-looking state our drama was first redeemed by Shakspeare. Even Milton has spoken of his “ wood-notes wild ;” and Thomson, more unceremoniously, has baptized him “ wild Shakspeare,”\*—as if a sort of half insane irregularity of genius were the quality that chiefly distinguished him from other great writers. If he be a “ wild ” writer, it is in comparison with some dramatists and poets of succeeding times, who, it must be admitted, are sufficiently tame : compared with the dramatists of his own age and of the age immediately preceding,—with the general throng of the writers from

\* Is not wild Shakspeare thine and Nature's boast ?

*Thomson's Summer*

among whom he emerged, and the coruscations of whose feebler and more desultory genius he has made pale,—he is distinguished from them by nothing which is more visible at the first glance than by the superior regularity and elaboration that mark his productions. Marlow, and Greene, and Kyd, may be called wild, and wayward, and careless ; but the epithets are inapplicable to Shakspeare, by whom, in truth, it was that the rudeness of our early drama was first refined, and a spirit of high art put into it, which gave it order and symmetry as well as elevation. It was the union of the most consummate judgment with the highest creative power that made Shakspeare the miracle that he was,—if, indeed, we ought not rather to say that such an endowment as his of the poetical faculty necessarily implied the clearest and truest discernment as well as the utmost productive energy,—even as the most intense heat must illuminate as well as warm. But, undoubtedly, his dramas are distinguished from those of his predecessors by much more than merely this superiority in the general principles upon which they are constructed. Such rare passages of exquisite poetry, and scenes of sublimity or true passion, as sometimes brighten the dreary waste of their productions, are equalled or excelled in almost every page of his ;—“ the highest heaven of invention,” to which they ascend only in far distant flights, and where their strength of pinion never sustains them long, is the familiar home of his genius. Other qualities, again, which charm us in his plays are nearly unknown in theirs. He first informed our drama with true wit and humour. Of boisterous, uproarious, blackguard merriment and buffoonery there is no want in our earlier dramatists, nor of

mere gibing and jeering and vulgar personal satire ; but of true airy wit there is little or none. In the comedies of Shakspeare the wit plays and dazzles like dancing light. This seems to have been the excellence, indeed, for which he was most admired by his contemporaries ; for quickness and felicity of repartee they placed him above all other playwrights. But his humour was still more his own than his wit. In that rich but delicate and subtle spirit of drollery, moistening and softening whatever it touches like a gentle oil, and penetrating through all enfoldings and rigorous encrustments into the kernel of the ludicrous that is in everything, which mainly created Malvolio, and Shallow, and Slender, and Dogberry, and Verges, and Bottom, and Lancelot, and Launce, and Costard, and Touchstone, and a score of other clowns, fools, and simpletons, and which, gloriously overflowing in Falstaff, makes his wit exhilarate like wine, Shakspeare has had almost as few successors as he had predecessors. And in these and all his other delineations he has, like every other great poet, or artist, not merely observed and described, but, as we have said, created, or invented. It is often laid down that the drama should be a faithful picture or representation of real life ; or, if this doctrine be given up in regard to the tragic or more impassioned drama, because even kings and queens in the actual world never do declaim in the pomp of blank verse, as they do on the stage, still it is insisted that in comedy no character is admissible that is not a transcript,—a little embellished perhaps,—but still substantially a transcript from some genuine flesh and blood original. But Shakspeare has shown that it

belongs to such an imagination as his to create in comedy, as well as in tragedy or in poetry of any other kind. Most of the characters that have just been mentioned are as purely the mere creations of the poet's brain as are • **Ariel, or Caliban, or the Witches in Macbeth.** If any modern critic will have it that Shakspeare must have actually seen **Malvolio, and Launce, and Touchstone**, before he could or at least would have drawn them, we would ask the said critic if he himself has ever seen such characters in real life ; and, if he acknowledge, as he needs must, that he never has, we would then put it to him to tell us why the contemporaries of the great dramatist might not have enjoyed them in his plays without ever having seen them elsewhere, just as we do,—or, in other words, why such delineations might not have perfectly fulfilled their dramatic purpose then as well as now, when they certainly do not represent anything that is to be seen upon earth, any more than do **Don Quixote and Sancho Panza**. There might have been professional clowns and fools in the age of Shakspeare such as are no longer extant ; but at no time did there ever actually exist such fools and clowns as his. These and other similar personages of the Shakspearian drama are as much mere poetical phantasmata as are the creations of the kindred humour of Cervantes. But are they the less amusing or interesting on that account ?—do we the less sympathise with them ?—nay, do we feel that they are the less naturally drawn ?—that they have for us less of a truth and life than the most faithful copies from the men and women of the real world ? But in these, too, there is no other drama so rich as that of Shakspeare. He has exhausted the old world of our actual experience

as well as imagined for us new worlds of his own.\* What other anatomist of the human heart has ever searched its hidden core, and laid bare all the strength and weakness of our mysterious nature, as he has done in the gushing tenderness of Juliet, and the “fine frenzy” of the dis-crowned Lear, and the sublime melancholy of Hamlet, and the wrath of the perplexed and tempest-torn Othello, and the eloquent misanthropy of Timon, and the fixed hate of Shylock? What other poetry has given shape to anything half so terrific as Lady Macbeth, or so winning as Rosalind, or so full of gentlest womanhood as Desdemona? In what other drama do we behold so living a humanity as in his? Who has given us a scene either so crowded with diversities of character, or so stirred with the heat and hurry of actual existence? The men and the manners of all countries and of all ages are there: the lovers and warriors, the priests and prophetesses, of the old heroic and kingly times of Greece,—the Athenians of the days of Alcibiades and Pericles,—the proud patricians and turbulent commonalty of the earliest period of republican Rome,—Cæsar, and Brutus, and Cassius, and Antony, and Cleopatra, and the other splendid figures of that later Roman scene,—the kings, and queens, and princes, and courtiers of barbaric Denmark, and Roman Britain, and Britain before the Romans,—those of Scotland in the time of the English Heptarchy,—those of England and France at the era of Magna Charta,—all ranks of the people of almost every reign of our subsequent history from the end of the four-

\* Each change of many-coloured life he drew,  
Exhausted worlds, and then imagined new.

Johnson.

teenth to the middle of the sixteenth century,—not to speak of Venice, and Verona, and Mantua, and Padua, and Illyria, and Navarre, and the Forest of Arden, and all the other towns and lands which he has peopled for us with their most real inhabitants. But Shakspeare is not a mere dramatist. Apart altogether from his dramatic power he is the greatest poet that ever lived. His sympathy is the most universal, his imagination the most plastic, his diction the most expressive, ever given to any writer. His poetry has in itself the power and varied excellences of all other poetry. While in grandeur, and beauty, and passion, and sweetest music, and all the other higher gifts of song, he may be ranked with the greatest,—with Spenser, and Chaucer, and Milton, and Dante, and Homer,—he is at the same time more nervous than Dryden, and more sententious than Pope, and almost more sparkling and of more abounding conceit, when he chooses, than Donne, or Cowley, or Butler. In whose handling was language ever such a flame of fire as it is in his? His wonderful potency in the use of this instrument would alone set him above all other writers. Language has been called the costume of thought: it is such a costume as leaves are to the tree or blossoms to the flower, and grows out of what it adorns. Every great and original writer accordingly has distinguished, and as it were individualised, himself as much by his diction as by even the sentiment which it embodies; and the invention of such a distinguishing style is one of the most unequivocal evidences of genius. But Shakspeare has invented twenty styles. He has a style for every one of his great characters, by which that character is distinguished from every other as much as Pope is distin-

guished by his style from Dryden, or Milton from Spenser.

CHAPMAN.—WEBSTER.—MIDDLETON.—DECKER.—CHETTLE.—MARSTON.—TAILOR.—TOURNEUR.—ROWLEY.—THOMAS HEYWOOD.

Shakspeare died in 1616. The space of a quarter of a century, or more, over which his career as a writer for the stage extends, is illustrated also by the names of a crowd of other dramatists, many of them of very remarkable genius; but Shakspeare is distinguished from the greater number of his contemporaries nearly as much as he is from his immediate predecessors. With regard to the latter, it has been well observed by a late critic of eminent justness and delicacy of taste, that, while they "possessed great power over the passions, had a deep insight into the darkest depths of human nature, and were, moreover, in the highest sense of the word, poets, of that higher power of creation with which Shakspeare was endowed, and by which he was enabled to call up into vivid existence all the various characters of men and all the events of human life, Marlow and his contemporaries had no great share,—so that their best dramas may be said to represent to us only gleams and shadowings of mind, confused and hurried actions, from which we are rather led to guess at the nature of the persons acting before us than instantaneously struck with a perfect knowledge of it; and, even amid their highest efforts, with them the fictions of the drama are felt to be but faint semblances of reality. If we seek for a poetical image, a burst of passion, a beautiful sentiment, a trait of nature, we seek not

in vain in the works of our very oldest dramatists. But none of the predecessors of Shakspeare must be thought of along with him, when he appears before us, like Prometheus, moulding the figures of men, and breathing into them the animation and all the passions of life."\* "The same," proceeds this writer, "may be said of almost all his illustrious contemporaries. Few of them ever have conceived a consistent character, and given a perfect drawing and colouring of it; they have rarely, indeed, inspired us with such belief in the existence of their personages as we often feel towards those of Shakspeare, and which makes us actually unhappy unless we can fully understand every thing about them, so like are they to living men. . . . The plans of their dramas are irregular and confused, their characters often wildly distorted, and an air of imperfection and incompleteness hangs in general over the whole composition; so that the attention is wearied out, the interest flags, and we rather hurry on, than are hurried, to the horrors of the final catastrophe."† In other words, the generality of the dramatic writers who were contemporary with Shakspeare still belong to the semi-barbarous school which subsisted before he began to write.

George Chapman, already mentioned as the translator of Homer, was born six or seven years before Shakspeare, but did not begin to write for the stage till about the year 1595, after which date he produced sixteen plays that have survived, besides one in the composition of which

\* 'Analytical Essays on the Early English Dramatists (understood to be by the late Henry MacKenzie), in Blackwood's Magazine, vol. ii. p. 657.

† *Ibid.*

he was assisted by Ben Jonson and Marston, and two others in which he and Shirley joined. One anonymous play, *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* (printed for the first time in 1824), and five others that are lost, have also been attributed to him. All these pieces were probably produced before the year 1620, although he lived till 1634. Chapman's best known, and probably also his best, plays are his tragedy of *Bussy d'Ambois*, reprinted in the third volume of Dilke's *Old Plays* (1814); his comedy of *Monsieur d'Olive*, in the same collection; and his comedies of *All Fools*, *The Widow's Tears*, and *Eastward Hoe* (the last the piece in which he was assisted by Jonson and Marston), in Dodsley's collection.\* “Of all the English play-writers,” says Lamb, “Chapman perhaps approaches nearest to Shakspeare in the descriptive and didactic, in passages which are less purely dramatic. Dramatic imitation was not his talent. He could not go out of himself, as Shakspeare could shift at pleasure, to inform and animate other existences; but in himself he had an eye to perceive, and a soul to embrace, all forms.”† Webster, Middleton, Decker, Chettle, Marston, Robert Tailor, Tourneur, and Rowley, may also be reckoned among the dramatic writers of considerable note who were the contemporaries of Shakspeare, though most, or all, of them survived him, and none of them began to write so early as he did. John Webster was parish clerk of St. Andrew's, Holborn, and a member of the Merchant Tailors' Company. Of four dramatic pieces of which he is the sole author, besides

\* The comedy of *All Fools* appeared for the first time in the second (Reed's) edition of Dodsley.

† *Specimens*, i. 107.

two comedies which he wrote in conjunction with Rowley, and other two in which he assisted Decker, his tragedies of *The White Devil*, and *The Duchess of Malfy*, are the most celebrated. The character of *Vittoria Corombona*, the *White Devil*, is drawn with great spirit; and the delineation of the *Duchess of Malfy* displays not only remarkable power and originality of imagination, but a dramatic skill and judgment which perhaps no one of the other writers we have named along with Webster has anywhere matched. None of them has either so little extravagance, or so much of the true terrific. “To move a horror skilfully,” says Lamb,—“to touch a soul to the quick,—to lay upon fear as much as it can bear,—to wean and weary a life till it is ready to drop, and then step in with mortal instruments to take its last forfeit,—this only a Webster can do. Writers of an inferior genius may ‘upon horror’s head horrors accumulate,’ but they cannot do this.”\* Webster seems to have been a slow writer, which it may be presumed few of his contemporaries were. In an advertisement prefixed to his *White Devil*, he says, “To those who report I was a long time in finishing this tragedy, I confess I do not write with a goose-quill winged with two feathers; and, if they will needs make it my fault, I must answer them with that of Euripides to Alcestides, a tragic writer. Alcestides objecting that Euripides had only in three days composed three verses, whereas himself had written three hundred; Thou tell’st truth, quoth he; but here’s the difference—thine shall only be read for three days, whereas mine shall continue three ages.” It will be seen from this passage that Webster was not wanting in a

\* *Specimens*, i. 234.

due sense of his own merits ; he seems also to have had a sufficient contempt for the public taste of his day, or at least for that of the ordinary audiences of the theatre where his piece had been brought out : “ I have noted,” he says, “ most of the people that come to that play-house resemble those ignorant asses who, visiting stationers’ shops, their use is not to inquire for good books, but new books ;” and he adds, “ Should a man present to such an auditory the most sententious tragedy that ever was written, observing all the critical laws, as height of style and gravity of person ; enrich it with the sententious Chorus, and, as it were, enliven death in the passionate and weighty Nuntius ; yet, after all this divine rapture, . . . . the breath that comes from the uncappable multitude is able to poison it.” We cannot discern in all this the modesty which Lamb so much praises.\* Neither does Webster greatly shine as a critic of the performances of others in a subsequent paragraph of his advertisement or preface, in which he gives us his opinion of some of his contemporaries :—“ I have ever,” he observes, “ truly cherished my good opinion of other men’s worthy labours, especially of that full and heightened style of Master Chapman ; the laboured and understanding works of Master Jonson ; the no less worthy com posures of the most worthily excellent Master Beaumont and Master Fletcher ; and lastly, without wrong last to be named, *the right happy and copious industry of Master Shakspeare, Master Decker, and Master Heywood.*” All this may be frank enough, as Lamb calls it, but it is certainly not very discriminating. Thomas Middleton is the author, in whole or in part, of between

\* Specimens, i. 236.

twenty and thirty dramatic pieces ; his associates in those which he did not write entirely himself being Decker, Rowley, Jonson, Fletcher, and Massinger. One of his plays, a comedy called *The Old Law*, which he wrote in conjunction with Rowley (and which was afterwards improved by Massinger), appears to have been acted so early as 1599 ; and another was published in 1602. The greater number of his pieces are comedies, and, compared with most of his contemporaries, he has a good deal of comic talent ; but his most noted dramatic production is his tragi-comedy of *The Witch*, which remained in manuscript till a small impression of it was printed, in 1778, by Isaac Reed, after it had been suggested by Steevens that it had probably been written before *Macbeth*, and might have been the source from which Shakspeare borrowed his *Witches* in that play. The commentators would have everything, in Shakspeare and everybody else, to be borrowed or stolen : they have the genius and the zeal of thief-catchers in ferreting out and exposing all transferences among writers, real and imaginary, of thoughts, words, and syllables ; and in the present case, as in many others, their professional ardour seems to have made a great deal out of very little. Lamb, in an admirable criticism, has pointed out the essential differences between the witches of Shakspeare and those of Middleton,\* from whose play, however, Shakspeare appears to have taken a few lines of his incantations ; unless, indeed —which we think not improbable—the verses in question were common popular rhymes, preserved among the traditions of the nursery or the country fireside. Middleton's witches have little of the supernatural awfulness of

\* *Specimens*, i. 187.

Shakspeare's. "Their names, and some of the properties," as Lamb observes, "which Middleton has given to his hags, excite smiles. The Weird Sisters are serious things. Their presence cannot co-exist with mirth. But, in a lesser degree, the witches of Middleton are fine creations. Their power, too, is, in some measure, over the mind. They raise jars, jealousies, strifes, *like a thick scurf o'er life.*" Still another and lower species of witch—"the plain, traditional, old woman witch, of our ancestors," as Lamb has called her, "poor, deformed, and ignorant, the terror of villages, herself amenable to a justice," is the heroine of the tragi-comedy of *The Witch of Edmonton*, the joint production of Rowley, Ford, and Decker. Thomas Decker was the author of, or a contributor to, more than thirty plays in all, nearly two-thirds of which, however, have perished. He has not much high imagination, but considerable liveliness of fancy, and also no little power of pathos. His best pieces are his comedies of *Old Fortunatus* and *The Honest Whore*; and his spirited *Satiromastix*, the principal character in which, Horace Junior, is a humourous caricature of Ben Jonson, who had previously ridiculed Decker upon the stage, in *Crispinus*, the hero of his satirical comedy of *The Poetaster*. Decker is also supposed to be the author of the best parts of the very touching play of *Patient Grissil*, which appeared in 1603, and which has been reprinted, from a unique copy of that edition, for the Shakespeare Society, under the care of Mr. Collier, 1841. It was written by him in conjunction with William Haughton, who is the author of several plays of little merit, and Henry Chettle, who was one of the most active and prolific dramatic writers of this time, although of eight-and-

thirty plays in which he is stated to have been more or less concerned, only the present and three others have been preserved. He has force as well as fertility, but it is apt to run into rant and absurdity. John Marston is the author of eight plays, and appears to have enjoyed in his own day a great reputation as a dramatist. He is to be classed, however, with Sackville and Chapman, as having more poetical than dramatic genius; although he has given no proof of a creative imagination equal to what is displayed in the early poetry of the former, and the best of Chapman's is instinct with a diviner fire. But he is, nevertheless, a very imposing declaimer in verse. Besides his plays, Marston published two volumes of poetry: the second, by which he is best known, a collection of satires, in three books, entitled 'The Scourge of Villainy,' a set of very vigorous and animated Juvenalian chants. Of Robert Tailor nothing is known, except that he is the author of one play, a comedy, entitled *The Hog hath lost his Pearl*, which was acted in 1613, and published the following year. It is reprinted in Dodoley's Collection, and Mr. Lamb has extracted from it the most interesting scenes, which, however, derive their interest rather from the force of the situation (one that has been turned to better account in other hands) than from anything very impressive in its treatment. The merit of a perspicuous style is nearly all that can be awarded to this writer. Cyril Tourneur is known as the author of two surviving dramas—*The Revenger's Tragedy*, and *The Atheist's Tragedy*, besides a tragi-comedy, called *The Nobleman*, which is lost.\*

\* Drake, in his work entitled *Shakspeare and his Times* (vol. ii. p. 570), speaks of *The Nobleman* as if he had read

The Revenger's Tragedy, in particular, which is reprinted in Dodsley's Collection, both in the development of character and the conduct of the action evinces a rare dramatic skill, and the dialogue in parts is wonderfully fine—natural and direct as that of real passion, yet ennobled by the breathing thoughts and burning words of a poetic imagination,—by images and lines that plough into the memory and the heart. William Rowley, whose co-operation in the Witch of Edmonton with Decker and Ford has been already noticed, owes the greater part of his reputation to his having been taken into partnership, in the composition of some of their pieces, by Middleton, Webster, Massinger, and other writers more eminent than himself; but he has also left us a tragedy and three comedies of his own. He has his share of the cordial and straightforward manner of our old dramatists; but not a great deal more that is of much value. Of the style of his comedy a judgment may be formed from the fact, recorded by Langbaine, that certain of the scenes of one of his pieces, 'A Shoemaker's a Gentleman,' used to be commonly performed by the strolling actors at Bartholomew and Southwark fairs. Though he appears to have begun to write, at least in association with others, some ten years before the death of Shakspeare, Rowley probably survived the middle of the century. So, also, it is supposed, did Thomas Heywood, the most rapid and voluminous of English writers, who ap-  
-it—telling us that it, as well as Tourneur's two tragedies, contains "some very beautiful passages and some entire scenes of great merit." In fact, the play is believed never to have been printed; but a manuscript copy of it was in the collection of Mr. Warburton, the Somerset herald, which was destroyed by his cook.

pears to have written for the stage as early as 1596, but whose last-published piece, written in conjunction with Rowley, was not printed till 1655.\* Heywood, according to his own account, in an Address to the Reader prefixed to his tragico-comedy of *The English Traveller*, published in 1633, had then, as he phrases it, “had either an entire hand, or, at the least, a main finger,” in the incredible number of two hundred and twenty dramatic productions! “True it is,” he adds, “that my plays are not exposed unto the world in volumes, to bear the title of Works, as others. One reason is that many of them, by shifting and change of companies, have been negligently lost; others of them are still retained in the hands of some actors who think it against their peculiar profit to have them come in print; and a third, that it never was any great ambition in me to be in this kind voluminously read.” Besides his plays, too, Heywood, who was an actor, and engaged in the practice of his profession for a great part of his life, wrote numerous other works, several of them large volumes in quarto and folio. Among them are a translation of Sallust; a folio volume entitled ‘*The Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels*;’ a ‘*General History of Women*;’ and another work entitled ‘*Nine Books of Various History concerning Women*,’ a folio of between four and five hundred pages, which, in a Latin note on the last page, he tells us was all excogitated, written, and printed in seventeen weeks. Of his plays above twenty are still extant,—about a tithe of the prodigious litter. Two of them, his

\* See Dodsley’s *Old Plays*, Edit. of 1826; vii. 218 and 222.

tragedy of *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, and his historical play of *The Four 'Prentices of London*, are in Dodsley; and three more, his tragi-comedies of *The English Traveller*, *The Royal King* and *Loyal Subject*, and *A Challenge for Beauty*, are in Dilke's Collection. Lamb has very happily characterised Heywood in a few words: "Heywood is a sort of *prose Shakspeare*. His scenes are to the full as natural and affecting. But we miss *the poet*, that which in *Shakspeare* always appears out and above the surface of *the nature*." His plays, however, are for the greater part in verse, which at least has ease of flow enough; and he may be styled not only a *prose Shakspeare*, but a more poetical Richardson. If he has not quite the power of Lillo in what has been called the domestic tragedy, which is the species to which his best pieces belong, he excels that modern dramatist both in facility and variety.\*

\* Mr. Hallam (Introd. to Lit. of Eur. iii. 618) states that between forty and fifty plays are ascribed to Heywood; in fact, only twenty-six existing plays have been ascribed to him, and only twenty-three can be decisively said to be his (see Dodsley, edit. of 1826, vii. 218, *et seq.*). Mr. Hallam is also not quite correct in elsewhere stating (ii. 382) that Heywood's play of *A Woman Killed with Kindness* bears the date of 1600, and in speaking of it as certainly his earliest production. The earliest known edition, which is called the third, is dated 1617; and the earliest notice of the play being acted is in 1603. Two other plays, the First and Second Parts of *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntingdon*, otherwise called *Robin Hood*, which have been ascribed to Heywood, were published in 1601. But there is some doubt as to his claim to these pieces. Heywood's First and Second Parts of *King Edward IV.* have been reprinted for the Shakespeare Society, under the care of Barron Field, Esq., 1842.

## BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

But the names of the dramatic writers of the present period that hold rank the nearest to Shakspeare still remain to be mentioned. Those of Beaumont and Fletcher must be regarded as indicating one poet rather than two, for it is impossible to make anything of the contradictory accounts that have been handed down as to their respective shares in the plays published in their conjoint names, and the plays themselves furnish no evidence that is more decisive. The only ascertained facts relating to this point are the following :—that John Fletcher was about ten years older than his friend Francis Beaumont, the former having been born in 1576, the latter in 1585 ; that Beaumont, however, as far as is known, came first before the world as a writer of poetry, his translation of the story of Salmacis and Hermaphroditus, from the Fourth Book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, having been published in 1602, when he was only in his seventeenth year ; that the *Masque of the Inner Temple* and *Gray's Inn* (consisting of only a few pages), produced in 1612, was written by Beaumont alone ; that the pastoral drama of the *Faithful Shepherdess* is entirely Fletcher's ; that the first published of the pieces which have been ascribed to the two associated together, the comedy of *The Woman-Hater*, appeared in 1607 ; that Beaumont died in March, 1616 ; and that, between that date and the death of Fletcher, in 1625, there were brought out, as appears from the note-book of Sir Henry Herbert, Deputy Master of the Revels, at least eleven of the plays found in the collection of their works, besides two others that were brought out in 1626, and two more that are lost. Deducting the

fourteen pieces which thus appear certainly to belong to Fletcher exclusively (except that in one of them, *The Maid in the Mill*, he is said to have been assisted by Rowley), there still remain thirty-seven or thirty-eight which it is possible they may have written together in the nine or ten years over which their poetical partnership is supposed to have extended.\* Eighteen of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays, including the *Masque* by the former and the *Pastoral* by the latter, were published separately before 1640; thirty-four more were first published together in a folio volume in 1647; and the whole were reprinted, with the addition of a comedy, supposed to have been lost (*The Wild Goose Chase*),† making a collection of fifty-three pieces in all, in another folio, in 1679. Beaumont and Fletcher want altogether that *white heat* of passion by which Shakspeare fuses all things into life and poetry at a touch, often making a single brief utterance flash upon us a full though momentary view of a character, which all that follows deepens and fixes, and makes the more like to actual seeing with the eyes and hearing with the ears. His was a deeper, higher, in every way more extended and capacious nature than theirs. They want his profound meditative philosophy as much as they do his burning poetry. Neither have they avoided nearly to the same degree that he has done the degradation of their fine gold by the inter-mixture of baser metal. They have given us all sorts of writing, good, bad, and indifferent, in abundance.

\* One, the comedy of *The Coronation*, is also attributed to Shirley.

† This play, one of the best of Fletcher's comedies, for it was not produced till some years after Beaumont's death, had been previously recovered and printed by itself in 1652.

Without referring in particular to what we now deem the indecency and licentiousness which pollutes all their plays, but which, strange to say, seems not to have been looked upon in that light by anybody in their own age, simply because it is usually wrapped in very transparent *double entendre*, they might, if judged by nearly one-half of all they have left us, be held to belong to almost the lowest rank of our dramatists instead of to the highest. There is scarcely one of their dramas that does not bear marks of haste and carelessness, or of a blight in some part or other from the playhouse tastes or compliances to which they were wont too easily to give themselves up when the louder applause of the day and the town made them thoughtless of their truer fame. But fortunately, on the other hand, in scarcely any of their pieces is the deformity thus occasioned more than partial: the circumstances in which they wrote have somewhat debased the produce of their fine genius, but their genius itself suffered nothing from the unworthy uses it was often put to. It springs up again from the dust and mud, as gay a creature of the elements as ever, soaring and singing at heaven's gate as if it had never touched the ground. Nothing can go beyond the flow and brilliancy of the dialogue of these writers in their happier scenes; it is the richest stream of real conversation, edged with the fire of poetry. For the drama of Beaumont and Fletcher is as essentially poetical and imaginative, though not in so high a style, as that of Shakspeare; and they, too, even if they were not great dramatists, would still be great poets. Much of their verse is among the sweetest in the language; and many of the lyrical passages, in particular, with which their

plays are interspersed, have a diviner soul of song in them than almost any other compositions of the same class. As dramatists they are far inferior to Shakspeare, not only, as we have said, in striking development and consistent preservation of character,—in other words, in truth and force of conception,—but also both in the originality and the variety of their creations in that department; they have confined themselves to a comparatively small number of broadly distinguished figures, which they delineate in a dashing, scene-painting fashion, bringing out their peculiarities rather by force of situation, and contrast with one another, than by the form and aspect with which each individually looks forth and emerges from the canvass. But all the resources of this inferior style of art they avail themselves of with the boldness of conscious power, and with wonderful skill and effect. Their invention of plot and incident is fertile in the highest degree; and in the conduct of a story for the mere purposes of the stage,—for keeping the attention of an audience awake and their expectation suspended throughout the whole course of the action,—they excel Shakspeare, who, aiming at higher things, and producing his more glowing pictures by fewer strokes, is careless about the mere excitement of curiosity, whereas they are tempted to linger as long as possible over every scene, both for that end, and because their proper method of evolving character and passion is by such delay and repetition of touch upon touch. By reason principally of this difference, the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, in the great days of the stage, and so long as the state of public manners tolerated their licence and grossness, were much greater favourites than those of Shakspeare.

in our theatres ; two of theirs, Dryden tells us, were acted in his time for one of Shakspeare's ; their intrigues,—their lively and florid but not subtle dialogue,—their strongly-marked but somewhat exaggerated representations of character,—their exhibitions of passion, apt to run a little into the melodramatic,—were more level to the general apprehension, and were found to be more entertaining, than his higher art and grander poetry. Beaumont and Fletcher, as might be inferred from what has already been said, are, upon the whole, greater in comedy than in tragedy ; and they seem themselves to have felt that their genius led them more to the former,—for, of their plays, only ten are tragedies, while their comedies amount to twenty-four or twenty-five, the rest being what were then called *tragi-comedies*—in many of which, however, it is true, the interest is, in part at least, of a tragic character, although the story ends happily.\* But, on the other hand, all their tragedies have also some comic passages ; and, in regard to this matter, indeed, their plays may be generally described as consisting, in the words of the prologue to one of them,† of

“ Passionate scenes mixed with no vulgar mirth.”

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\* The following definition of what was formerly understood by the term *tragi-comedy*, or *tragic-comedy*, is given by Fletcher in the preface to his *Faithful Shepherdess* :—“ A tragic-comedy is not so called in respect of mirth and killing, but in respect it wants deaths (which is enough to make it no tragedy) : yet brings some near to it (which is enough to make it no comedy) : which [*viz.* tragic-comedy] must be a representation of familiar people, with such kind of trouble as no life can be without ; so that a god is as lawful in this as in a tragedy ; and mean people as in a comedy.”

† *The Custom of the Country.*

Undoubtedly, taking them all in all, they have left us the richest and most magnificent drama we possess after that of Shakspere ; the most instinct and alive both with the true dramatic spirit and with that of general poetic beauty and power ; the most brilliantly lighted up with wit and humour ; the freshest and most vivid, as well as various, picture of human manners and passions ; the truest mirror, and at the same time the finest embellishment, of nature.

#### JONSON.

Ben Jonson was born in 1574, or two years before Fletcher, whom he survived twelve years, dying in 1637. He is supposed to have begun to write for the stage so early as 1593 ; but nothing that he produced attracted any attention till his *Comedy of Every Man in his Humour* was brought out at the Rose Theatre in 1596. This play, greatly altered and improved, was published in 1598 ; and between that date and his death Jonson produced above fifty more dramatic pieces in all, of which ten are comedies, three what he called comical satires, only two tragedies, and all the rest masques, pageants, or other court entertainments. His two tragedies of *Sejanus* and *Catiline* are admitted on all hands to be nearly worthless ; and his fame rests almost entirely upon his first comedy, his three subsequent comedies of *Volpone* or *The Fox*, *Epicoene* or *The Silent Woman*, and *The Alchemist*, his court Masques, and a Pastoral entitled *The Sad Shepherd*, which was left unfinished at his death. Ben Jonson's comedies admit of no comparison with those of Shakspere or of Beaumont and Fletcher : he belongs to another school. His plays are professed attempts to revive, in

English, the old classic Roman drama, and aim in their construction at a rigorous adherence to the models afforded by those of Plautus, and Terence, and Seneca. They are admirable for their elaborate art, which is, moreover, informed by a power of strong conception of a decidedly original character ; they abound both in wit and eloquence, which in some passages rises to the glow of poetry ; the figures of the scene stand out in high relief, every one of them, from the most important to the most insignificant, being finished off at all points with the minutest care ; the dialogue carries on the action, and is animated in many parts with the right dramatic reciprocation ; and the plot is in general contrived and evolved with the same learned skill, and the same attention to details, that are shown in all other particulars. But the execution, even where it is most brilliant, is hard and angular ; nothing seems to flow naturally and freely ; the whole has an air of constraint, and effort, and exaggeration ; and the effect that is produced by the most arresting passages is the most undramatic that can be,—namely, a greater sympathy with the performance as a work of art than as anything else. It may be added that Jonson's characters, though vigorously delineated, and though not perhaps absolutely false to nature, are most of them rather of the class of her occasional excrescences or eccentricities than samples of any general humanity ; they are the oddities and perversions of a particular age or state of manners, and have no universal truth or interest. What is called the humour of Jonson consists entirely in the exhibition of the more ludicrous kinds of these morbid aberrations ; like everything about him, it has force and raciness enough, but will be most relished

by those who are most amused by dancing bears and other shows of that class. It seldom or never makes the heart laugh, like the humour of Shakspeare,—which is, indeed, a quality of altogether another essence. As a poet, Jonson is greatest in his masques and other court pageants. The airy elegance of these compositions is a perfect contrast to the stern and rugged strength of his other works; the lyrical parts of them especially have often a grace and sportiveness, a flow as well as a finish, the effect of which is very brilliant. Still, even in these, we want the dewy light, and rich, coloured irradiation of the poetry of Shakspeare and Fletcher: the lustre is pure and bright, but at the same time cold and sharp, like that of crystal. In Jonson's unfinished pastoral of *The Sad Shepherd* there is some picturesque description and more very harmonious verse, and the best parts of it (much of it is poor enough) are perhaps in a higher style than anything else he has written; but to compare it, as has sometimes been done, either as a poem or as a drama, with *The Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher seems to us to evince a deficiency of true feeling for the highest things, equal to what would be shewn by preferring, as has also been done by some critics, the humour of Jonson to that of Shakspeare. Fletcher's pastoral, blasted as it is in some parts by fire not from heaven, is still a green and leafy wilderness of poetical beauty; Jonson's, deformed also by some brutality more elaborate than anything of the same sort in Fletcher, is at the best but a trim garden, and, had it been ever so happily finished, would have been nothing more.

## MASSINGER.—FORD.

After Shakspeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Jonson, the next great name in our drama is that of Philip Massinger, who was born in 1584, and is supposed to have begun to write for the stage soon after 1606, although his first published play, his tragedy of *The Virgin Martyr*, in which he was assisted by Decker, did not appear till 1622. Of thirty-eight dramatic pieces which he is said to have written, only eighteen have been preserved ; eight others were in the collection of Mr. Warburton, which his servant destroyed. Massinger, like Jonson, had received a learned education, and his classic reading has coloured his style and manner ; but he had scarcely so much originality of genius as Jonson. He is a very eloquent writer, but has little power of high imagination or pathos, and still less wit or comic power. He could rise, however, to a vivid conception of a character moved by some single aim or passion ; and he has drawn some of the darker shades of villainy with great force. His *Sir Giles Overreach*, in *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, and his *Luke in the City Madam*, are perhaps his most successful delineations in this style. In the conduct of his plots, also, he generally displays much skill. In short, all that can be reached by mere talent and warmth of susceptibility he has achieved ; but his province was to appropriate and decorate rather than to create.

John Ford, the author of about a dozen plays that have survived, and one of whose pieces is known to have been acted so early as 1613, has one quality, that of a deep pathos, perhaps more nearly allied to high genius than

any Massinger has shown ; but the range of the latter in the delineation of action and passion is so much more extensive, that we can hardly refuse to regard him as the greater dramatist. Ford's blank verse is not so imposing as Massinger's ; but it has often a delicate beauty, sometimes a warbling wildness and richness, beyond anything in Massinger's fuller swell.

#### LATER ELIZABETHAN PROSE WRITERS.

Even the prose literature of the present period is much of it of so imaginative a character, that it may be considered to be a kind of half poetry. We have already traced the change which English prose-writing underwent in the course of the second and third quarters of the sixteenth century, passing from the familiar but elegant simplicity of the style of Sir Thomas More to the more formal and elaborate but still succinct and unincumbered rhetoric of Ascham, from thence to the affectations of Lyly the Euphuist and his imitators, and finally out of what we may call that sickly and unnatural state of transition to the richly decorated elegance of Sidney. Along with Sidney's famous work, though of somewhat later date, may be mentioned his friend Spenser's 'View of the State of Ireland, written dialogue-wise between Eudoxus and Irenæus,' probably about the year 1590. It is a composition worthy of the many-visioned poet—full of matter, full of thought, full of life, with passages of description in it that make present the distant and the past, like the painter's colours. The style has not so much that is outwardly imposing as Sidney's, but more inward vigour and earnestness, as well as more compactness and

simew; in short, more of the true glow of eloquence, more of a heart leaping within it, and sending a pulse through every word and cadence.

On the whole, by the end of the century, our prose, as exhibited in its highest examples, if it had lost something in ease and clearness, had gained considerably in copiousness, in sonorousness, and in splendour. In its inferior specimens, also, a corresponding change is to be traced, but of a modified character. In these the ancient simplicity and directness had given place only to a long-winded wordiness, and an awkwardness and intricacy, sometimes so excessive as to be nearly unintelligible, produced by piling clause upon clause, and involution upon involution, in the endeavour to crowd into every sentence as much meaning or as many particulars as possible. Here the change was nearly altogether for the worse—the loss in one direction was compensated by hardly anything that could be called a gain in another. One additional point of difference, as yet chiefly exemplified in the sermons and other writings of divines, was the introduction towards the close of the reign of Elizabeth of what may be described as at once the most artificial and the most puerile mode of composition ever practised, consisting in an incessant fire of alliteration, punning, and the most jejune verbal conceits, often in a Babylonish dialect, or party-coloured tissue of words, made up of nearly as much Latin, Greek, and Hebrew as native English. This was what had been substituted in popular preaching for the buffoonery of Latimer; whether to the gain or loss of sound religion and theological literature, it might be hard to determine.

## TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE.

The authorised translation of the Bible, on the whole so admirable both for correctness and beauty of style, is apt, on the first thought, to be regarded as exhibiting the actual state of the language in the time of James I., when it was first published. It is to be remembered, however, that the new translation was formed, by the special directions of the king, upon the basis of that of Parkell's, or the Bishops' Bible, which had been made nearly forty years before, and which had itself been founded upon that of Cranmer, made in the reign of Henry VIII. The consequence is, as Mr. Hallam has remarked, that, whether the style of King James's translation be the perfection of the English language or no, it is not the language of his reign. "It may, in the eyes of many," adds Mr. Hallam, "be a better English, but it is not the English of Daniel, or Raleigh, or Bacon, as any one may easily perceive. It abounds, in fact, especially in the Old Testament, with obsolete phraseology, and with single words long since abandoned, or retained only in provincial use."\* This is, perhaps, rather strongly put; for although the preceding version served as a general guide to the translators, and was not needlessly deviated from, they have evidently modernized its style, not perhaps quite up to that of their own day, but so far, we apprehend, as to exclude nearly all words and phrases that had then passed out even of common and familiar use. In that theological age, indeed, few forms of expression found in the Bible could well have fallen altogether into

\* Lit. of Eur., iii. 134.

desuetude, although some may have come to be less apt and significant than they once were, or than others that might now be substituted for them. But we believe the new translators, in any changes they made, were very careful to avoid the employment of any mere words of yesterday, the glare of whose recent coinage would have contrasted offensively with the general antique colour of diction which they desired to retain. If ever their version were to be revised, whether to improve the rendering of some passages by the lights of modern criticism, or to mend some hardness and intricacy of construction in others, it ought to be retouched in the same spirit of affectionate veneration for the genius and essential characteristics of its beautiful style ; and a good rule to be laid down might be, that no word should be admitted in the improved renderings which was not in use in the age when the translation was originally made. The language was then abundantly rich enough to furnish all the words that could be wanted for the purpose.

THEOLOGICAL WRITERS.—JAMES I.—BISHOP ANDREWS.—  
DONNE.—HALL.—HOOKER.

Besides the translation of the Bible, the portion of the English literature of the present period that is theological is very great in point of quantity, and a part of it also possesses distinguished claims to notice in a literary point of view. Religion was the great subject of speculation and controversy in this country throughout the entire space of a century and a half between the Reformation and the Revolution ; and nothing can more strikingly

illustrate the universality of the interest that was now taken in theological controversy, than the fact that both the kings whose reigns fill the first half of the seventeenth century have left us a considerable quantity of literary manufacture of their own, and that it is almost all theological. The writings of Charles I. will be noticed in the next Book. King James, whose works were collected and published in a folio volume in 1616, under the care of Dr. Mountague, Bishop of Winchester, had published what he called a 'Fruitful Meditation' upon part of the Apocalypse, "in form of ane sermon," so early as the year 1588, when he was only a youth of two and twenty. Indeed, according to Bishop Mountague's account, this performance was "written by his majesty before he was twenty years of age." Soon after, on the destruction of the Spanish Armada, he produced another 'Meditation' on certain verses of one of the chapters of the First Book of Chronicles. Among his subsequent publications are Meditations on the Lord's Prayer and on some verses of the 27th chapter of St. Matthew. And nearly all his other works, his 'Daemonologie,' first published in 1597; his 'True Law of Free Monarchies,' 1598; his 'Basilicon Doron,' or advice to his son Prince Henry, 1599; his 'Apology for the Oath of Allegiance,' 1605,—are, in the main, theological treatises. It is scarcely necessary to add that they are of little or no value, either theological or literary; though they are curious as illustrating the intellectual and moral character of James, who was certainly a person of no depth either of learning or of judgment, though of some reading in the single province of theology, and also of considerable shrewdness and readiness, and an inex-

haustible flow of words, which he mistook for eloquence and genius.

The mass of the theological literature of this period consists of sermons and controversial tracts, all of which, with a few exceptions, have now passed into complete oblivion. One of the most eminent preachers, perhaps the most eminent, of the age of Elizabeth and James, was Dr. Lancelot Andrews, who, after having held the sees of Chichester and Ely, died Bishop of Winchester in 1626. Bishop Andrews was one of the translators of the Bible, and is the author, among other works, of a folio volume of sermons published by direction of Charles I., soon after his death ; of another folio volume of tracts and speeches, which appeared in 1629 ; of a third volume of lectures on the Ten Commandments, published in 1642 ; and of a fourth, containing lectures delivered at St. Paul's and at St. Giles's, Cripplegate, published in 1657. He was, perhaps, the most learned of the English theologians of that learned time, and was besides a person of great vigour and acuteness of understanding ; so that his death was regarded by scholars both at home and abroad as the extinction of the chief light of the English church. Milton, then a youth of seventeen, bewailed the event in a Latin elegy, full of feeling and fancy ; and even in a tract written many years afterwards, when his opinions had undergone a complete change, he admits that “ Bishop Andrews of late years, and in these times the Primate of Armagh (Usher), for their learning are reputed the best able to say what may be said ” in defence of episcopacy.\* Both the learning

\* The Reason of Church Government argued against Prelacy (published in 1641), Book i. chap. 3.

and ability of Andrews, indeed, are conspicuous in every thing he has written ; but his eloquence, nevertheless, is to a modern taste grotesque enough. In his more ambitious passages he is the very prince of verbal posture-masters,—if not the first in date, the first in extravagance, of the artificial, quibbling, syllable-tormenting school of our English pulpit rhetoricians ; and he undoubtedly contributed more to spread the disease of that manner of writing than any other individual. Not only did his eminence in this line endear him to the royal tastes of Elizabeth and James ; all men admired and strove to copy after him. Fuller declares that he was “an inimitable preacher in his way ;” and then he tell us that “ pious and pleasant Bishop Felton, his contemporary and colleague, endeavoured in vain in his sermons to assimilate his style, and therefore said merrily of himself, I had almost marred my own natural trot by endeavouring to imitate his artificial amble.” Many a “natural trot” Andrews no doubt was the cause of spoiling in his day, and long after it. This bishop is further very notable, in the history of the English church, as the first great assertor of those semi-popish notions touching doctrines, rites, and ecclesiastical government with which Laud afterwards blew up the establishment. Andrews, however, was a very different sort of person from Laud, — as superior to him in sense and policy as in learning and general strength and comprehensiveness of understanding. A well-known story that is told of him proves his moderation as much as his wit and readiness : when he and Dr. Neal, Bishop of Durham, were one day standing behind the king’s chair as he sat at dinner (it was the day on which James dissolved his last

parliament, and the anecdote is related on the authority of Waller, the poet, who was present), his majesty, turning round, addressed the two prelates—My lords, cannot I take my subjects' money when I want it, without all this formality in parliament? “The Bishop of Durham readily answered, God forbid, Sir, but you should; you are the breath of our nostrils. Whereupon the king turned, and said to the Bishop of Winchester, Well, my lord, what say you? Sir, replied the Bishop, I have no skill to judge of parliamentary cases. The king answered, No put-offs, my lord, answer me presently. Then, Sir, said he, I think it is lawful for you to take my brother Neal's money, for he offers it.”\* Clarendon has expressed his belief that if Archbishop Bancroft had been succeeded in the see of Canterbury by Andrews, instead of Abbot, the infection of the Geneva fire would have been kept out, which could not afterwards be so easily expelled.†

Donne, the poet, was also a voluminous writer in prose; having left a folio volume of sermons, besides a treatise against Popery entitled ‘The Pseudo-Martyr,’ another singular performance, entitled ‘Biathanatos,’ in confutation of the common notion about the necessary sinfulness of suicide, and some other professional disquisitions. His biographer, Izaak Walton, says that he preached “as an angel, *from* a cloud, but not *in* a cloud;” but most modern readers will probably be of opinion that he has not quite made his escape from it. His manner is fully as quaint in his prose as in his verse, and his way of thinking as subtle and peculiar. His

\* Life of Waller, prefixed to his Poems, 1712.

† Hist. i. 88 (edit. of 1717).

sermons are also, as well as those of Andrews, overlaid with learning, much of which seems to be only a useless and cumbersome show. Doubtless, however, there are deep and beautiful things in Donne, for those that will seek for them ; as has, indeed, been testified by those who in modern times have made themselves the best acquainted with these neglected theological works of his.\*

Another of the most learned theologians and eloquent preachers of those times was also an eminent poet, Joseph Hall, born in 1524, and successively Bishop of Exeter and Norwich, from which latter see having been expell'd by the Long Parliament, he died, after protracted sufferings from imprisonment and poverty, in 1656. Hall began his career of authorship by the publication of the first three books of his *Satires*, in 1597, while he was a student at Cambridge, and only in his twenty-third year. A continuation followed the next year, under the title of ' *Virgidemiarum the Three last Books* ;' and the whole were afterwards republished together, as ' *Virgidemiarum Six Books* ;' that is, six books of bundles of rods. " These satires," says Warton, who has given an elaborate analysis of them, " are marked with a classical precision to which English poetry had yet rarely attained. They are replete with animation of style and sentiment. . . . . The characters are delineated in strong and lively colouring, and their discriminations are touched with the masterly traces of genuine humour. The versification is equally energetic and elegant, and the fabric

\* The first edition of the collected Works of Dr. Donne has been lately published by the Rev. Henry Alford, M.A., in 6 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1839.

of the couplets approaches to the modern standard.”\* Hall’s English prose works, which are very voluminous, consist of sermons, polemical tracts, paraphrases of Scripture, casuistical divinity, and some pieces on practical religion, of which his *Contemplations*, his *Art of Divine Meditation*, and his *Enochismus*, or *Treatise on the Mode of Walking with God*, are the most remarkable. The poetic temperament of Hall reveals itself in his prose as well as in his verse, by the fervour of his piety, and the forcible and often picturesque character of his style, in which it has been thought he made Seneca his model. “The writer of the *Satires*,” observes Warton, “is perceptible in some of his gravest polemical or Scriptural treatises; which are perpetually interspersed with excursive illustrations, familiar allusions, and observations on life.”† It will be perceived, from all this, that both in style and in mind Hall and Donne were altogether opposed; neither in his prose nor in his verse has the former the originality of the latter, or the fineness of thought that will often break out in a sudden streak of light from the midst of his dark sayings; but, on the other hand, he is perfectly free from the dominant vices of Donne’s manner, his conceits, his quaintness, his remote and fantastic analogies, his obscurity, his harshness, his parade of a useless and encumbering erudition.

Last of all may be mentioned, among the great theological writers of this great theological time, one who stands alone, Richard Hooker, the illustrious author of the ‘Eight Books of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity;’ of which the first four were published in 1594, the fifth

\* *Hist. Eng. Poet.* iv. 338.

† *Id. p. 336.*

in 1597, the three last not till 1632, many years after the author's death. Hooker's style is almost without a rival for its sustained dignity of march ; but that which makes it most remarkable is its union of all this learned gravity and correctness with a flow of genuine, racy English, almost as little tinctured with pedantry as the most familiar popular writing. The effect also of its evenness of movement is the very reverse of tameness or languor ; the full river of the argument dashes over no precipices, but yet rolls along without pause, and with great force and buoyancy.

#### BACON

Undoubtedly the principal figure in English prose literature, as well as in philosophy, during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, is Francis Bacon. Bacon, born in 1561, published the first edition of his 'Essays' in 1597 ; his Two Books of the 'Advancement of Learning' in 1605 ; his 'Wisdom of the Ancients' (in Latin) in 1610 ; a third edition of his 'Essays,' greatly extended, in 1612 ; his Two Books of the 'Novum Organum,' or Second Part of the *Instauratio Magna*, designed to consist of Six Parts (also in Latin), in 1620 ; his 'History of the Reign of Henry VII.,' in 1622 ; his Nine Books 'De Augmentis Scientiarum,' a Latin translation and extension of his *Advancement of Learning*, in 1623. He died in 1626. The originality of the Baconian or Inductive method of philosophy, the actual service it has rendered to science, and even the end which it may be most correctly said to have in view, have all been subjects of dispute since Bacon's

time, and still are ; but, notwithstanding all differences of opinion upon these points, the acknowledgment that he was intellectually one of the most colossal of the sons of men has been nearly unanimous. They who have not seen his greatness under one form have discovered it in another ; there is a discordance among men's ways of looking at him, or their theories respecting him ; but the mighty shadow which he projects athwart the two by-gone centuries lies there immoveable, and still extending as time extends. The very deductions which are made from his merits in regard to particular points thus only heighten the impression of his general eminence,—of that something about him not fully understood or discerned, which, spite of all curtailment of his claims in regard to one special kind of eminence or another, still leaves the sense of his eminence as strong as ever. As for his *Novum Organum*, or so-called new instrument of philosophy, it must be conceded that it was not really new when he announced it as such, either as a process followed in the practice of scientific discovery or as a theory of the right method of discovery. In the latter sense it was at least as old as Aristotle : in the former it was as old as science itself. Neither was Bacon the first writer, in his own or the immediately preceding age, who recalled attention to the inductive method, or who pointed out the barrenness of what was then called philosophy in the schools. Nor was it he that brought the reign of that philosophy to a close : it was falling fast into disrepute before he assailed it, and would probably have passed away quite as soon as it did although his writings had never appeared. Nor has he either looked at that old philosophy with a very penetrating or com-

prehensive eye, or even shown a perfect understanding of the inductive method in all its applications and principles. As for his attempts in the actual practice of the inductive method, they were either insignificant or utter failures ; and that, too, while some of his contemporaries, who in no respect acknowledged him as their teacher, were turning it to account in extorting from nature the most brilliant revelations. Nay, can it be doubted that, if Bacon had never lived, or never written, the discoveries and the writings of Galileo, and Kepler, and Pascal, and others who were now extending the empire of science by the very method which he has explained and recommended, but most assuredly without having been instructed in that method by him, would have established the universal recognition of it as the right method of philosophy just as early as such recognition actually took place ? That Bacon's *Novum Organum* has, even down to the present day, affected in any material degree the actual progress of science, may be very reasonably doubted. What great discovery or improvement can be named among all those that have been made since his time, which, from the known facts of its history, we may not fairly presume would have been made at any rate, though the *Novum Organum* had never been written ? What instance can be quoted of the study of that work having made, or even greatly contributed to make, any individual a discoverer in science who would not in all probability have been equally such if he had never seen or heard of it ? In point of fact, there is no reason to suppose that very many of those by whom science has been most carried forward since it appeared had either deeply studied

Bacon's *Novum Organum*, or had even acquired any intimate or comprehensive acquaintance with the rules and directions therein laid down from other sources. Nor is it likely that they would have been more successful experimenters or greater discoverers if they had. For there is surely nothing in any part of the method of procedure prescribed by Bacon for the investigation of truth, that would not occur of itself to the sagacity and common sense of any person of an inventive genius pursuing such investigation ; indeed, every discovery that has been made, except by accident, since science had any being, must have been arrived at by the very processes which he has explained. There can be little doubt that it would be found, on a survey of the whole history of scientific discovery, that its progress has always depended partly upon the remarkable genius of individuals, partly upon the general state of the world and the condition of civilization at different times, and not in any sensible degree upon the mere speculative views as to the right method of philosophy that have at particular eras been taught in schools or books, or otherwise generally diffused. In fact it is much more reasonable to suppose that such speculative views should have been usually influenced by the actual progress of discovery than it by them ; for the recognition of sound principles of procedure, in as far as that is implied in their practical application, though not perhaps the contemplation and exposition of them in a systematic form, is necessarily involved, as has been just observed, in the very act of scientific discovery. All this being considered, we cannot attribute to Bacon's *Novum Organum* any considerable direct share, nor even much indirect

influence, in promoting the progress which science has made in certain departments since his time ; we think that progress is to be traced to other causes altogether, and that it would have been pretty nearly what it is though the *Novum Organum* never had been written. Galileo, and not Bacon, is the true father of modern natural philosophy. That, in truth, was not Bacon's province at all ; neither his acquirements nor the peculiar character and constitution of his mind fitted him for achieving anything on that ground. The common mistake regarding him is the same as if it were to be said that not Homer, but Aristotle, was the father of poetry, because he first investigated and explained the principles or philosophy of a part of the art of poetry, although his own mind was one of the most unpoetical that ever existed. Bacon belongs not to mathematical or natural science, but to literature and to moral science in its most extensive acceptation,—to the realm of imagination, of wit, of eloquence, of æsthetics, of history, of jurisprudence, of political philosophy, of logic, of metaphysics and the investigation of the powers and operations of the human mind. For this last, in reality, and not the investigation of nature, is the subject of his *Novum Organum* and his other writings on the advancement of human knowledge. He is in no respect an investigator or expounder of mathematics, or of mechanics, or of astronomy, or of chemistry, or of any other branch of geometrical or physical science (his contributions to natural history are not worth regarding) ; but he is a most penetrating and comprehensive investigator, and a most magnificent expounder, of that higher philosophy, in comparison with which all these things are but a mere

intellectual sort of legerdemain. Let the mathematicians, therefore, and the mechanicians, and the naturalists find out for themselves some other head: they have no claim to Bacon. All his works, his essays, his philosophical writings, commonly so called, and what he has done in history, are of one and the same character; reflective and, so to speak, poetical, not simply demonstrative, or elucidatory of mere matters of fact. What, then, is his glory?—in what did his greatness consist? In this, we should say;—that an intellect at once one of the most capacious and one of the most profound ever granted to a mortal—in its powers of vision at the same time one of the most penetrating and one of the most far-reaching—was in him united and reconciled with an almost equal endowment of the imaginative faculty; and that he is, therefore, of all philosophical writers, the one in whom are found together, in the largest proportions, depth of thought and splendour of eloquence. His intellectual ambition, also,—a quality of the imagination,—was of the most towering character; and no other philosophic writer has taken up so grand a theme as that on which he has laid out his strength in his greatest works. But with the progress of scientific discovery that has taken place during the last two hundred years, we conceive these works to have had hardly anything to do. His *Advancement of Learning* and his *Novum Organum* appear to us to be poems rather than scientific treatises; and we should almost as soon think of fathering modern physical science upon *Paradise Lost* as upon them. Perhaps the calmest and clearest examination of Bacon's philosophy that has yet appeared is that given by Mr. Hallam in his *History of European Literature*.

Mr. Hallam's estimate of what Bacon has done for science is much higher than ours ; but yet the following passage seems to come very near to the admission of, or at least very strongly to corroborate, all that we have just been stating :—“ It is evident that he had turned his thoughts to physical philosophy rather for an exercise of his reasoning faculties, and out of his insatiable thirst for knowledge, than from any peculiar aptitude for their subjects, much less any advantage of opportunity for their cultivation. He was more eminently the philosopher of human than of general nature. Hence he is exact as well as profound in all his reflections on civil life and mankind ; while his conjectures in natural philosophy, though often very acute, are apt to wander far from the truth in consequence of his defective acquaintance with the phenomena of nature. His Centuries of Natural History give abundant proof of this. He is, in all these inquiries, like one doubtfully, and by degrees, making out a distant prospect, but often deceived by the haze. But if we compare what may be found in the sixth, seventh, and eighth Books *De Augmentis*, in the Essays, the History of Henry VII., and the various short treatises contained in his works, on moral and political wisdom, and on human nature, from experience of which all such wisdom is drawn, with the Rhetoric, Ethics, and Politics of Aristotle, or with the historians most celebrated for their deep insight into civil society and human character,—with Thucydides, Tacitus, Philip de Comines, Machiavel, Davila, Hume,—we shall, I think, find that one man may almost be compared with all of these together. When Galileo is named as equal to Bacon, it is to be remembered that Galileo was no moral or political philo-

sopher, and in this department Leibnitz certainly falls very short of Bacon. Burke, perhaps, comes, of all modern writers, the nearest to him; but, though Bacon may not be more profound than Burke, he is still more copious and comprehensive.”\*

## BURTON.

A remarkable prose work of this age, which ought not to be passed over without notice, is Burton’s ‘Anatomy of Melancholy.’ Robert Burton, who, on his title-page, takes the name of Democritus Junior, died in

\* Lit. of Eur. iii. 218. Among many other admirable things thickly scattered over the whole of this section on Bacon (pp. 166—228), Mr. Hallam has taken an opportunity of pointing out an almost universal misapprehension into which the modern expositors of Bacon’s *Novum Organum* have fallen on the subject of his celebrated *Idola*, which, as is here shown, are not at all what we now call idols, that is, false divinities, but merely, in the Greek sense of the word, images or fallacious appearances of things as opposed to realities (pp. 194—197). The reader may also be referred to another disquisition on Bacon, of great brilliancy, by Mr. Macaulay, which originally appeared in the Edinburgh Review (No. 132, for July 1837, pp. 1—104). And in addition to the illustrative expositions of the *Novum Organum*, of a more scientific character, by the late Professor Playfair, in his Dissertation on the Progress of Mathematical and Physical Science prefixed to the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (pp. 453—474); and by Sir John Herschell, in his Preliminary Discourse on the Objects, Advantages, and Pleasures of the Study of Natural Philosophy, in Dr. Lardner’s Cabinet Cyclopædia, we would mention, as containing some views of the greatest importance, the Second Section of the Introduction to the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* (pp. 24—82), which was written by Coleridge. Coleridge, by-the-by, is one of the very few modern writers who have not fallen into the misconception noticed above about Bacon’s *Idola*. See his treatise, p. 28.

1640, and his book was first published in 1621. It is an extraordinary accumulation of out-of-the-way learning, interspersed, somewhat in the manner of Montaigne's *Essays*, with original matter, but with this, among other differences,—that in Montaigne the quotations have the air of being introduced, as we know that in fact they were, to illustrate the original matter, which is the web of the discourse, they but the embroidery ; whereas in Burton the learning is rather the web, upon which what he has got to say of his own is worked in by way of forming a sort of decorative figure. Burton is far from having the variety or abundance of Montaigne ; but there is considerable point and penetration in his style, and he says many striking things in a sort of half-splenetic, half-jocular humour, which many readers have found wonderfully stimulating. Dr. Johnson is said to have declared that Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* was the only book that ever drew him out of bed an hour sooner than he would otherwise have got up.

#### HISTORICAL WRITERS.

Among the historical writers of the reign of James may be first mentioned the all-accomplished Sir Walter Raleigh. Raleigh is the author of a few short poems, and of some miscellaneous pieces in prose ; but his great work is his 'History of the World,' composed during his imprisonment in the Tower, and first published in a folio volume in 1614. It is an unfinished work, coming down only to the first Macedonian war ; and there is no reason to suppose that any more of it was ever written, although it has been asserted that a second volume was burnt by the author. Raleigh's *History*, as a record of

facts, has long been superseded ; the interest it possesses at the present day is derived almost entirely from its literary merits, and from a few passages in which the author takes occasion to allude to circumstances that have fallen within his own experience. Much of it is written without any ambition of eloquence ; but the style, even where it is most careless, is still lively and exciting, from a tone of the actual world which it preserves, and a certain frankness and heartiness coming from Raleigh's profession and his warm impetuous character. It is not disfigured by any of the petty pedantries to some one or other of which most of the writers of books in that day gave way more or less, and it has altogether comparatively little of the taint of age upon it ; while in some passages the composition, without losing anything of its natural grace and heartiness, is wrought up to great rhetorical polish and elevation.

Another celebrated historical work of this time is Richard Knolles's *History of the Turks*, published in 1610. Johnson, in one of his *Ramblers*, has awarded to Knolles the first place among English historians ; and Mr. Hallam concurs in thinking that his style and power of narration have not been too highly extolled by that critic. " His descriptions," continues Mr. Hallam, " are vivid and animated ; circumstantial, but not to feebleness ; his characters are drawn with a strong pencil. .... In the style of Knolles there is sometimes, as Johnson has hinted, a slight excess of desire to make every phrase effective ; but he is exempt from the usual blemishes of his age ; and his command of the language is so extensive, that we should not err in placing him

among the first of our elder writers.”\* Much of this praise, however, is to be considered as given to the uniformity or regularity of Knolles’s style; the chief fault of which perhaps is, that it is too continuously elaborated and sustained for a long work. We have already mentioned Samuel Daniel’s History of England from the Conquest to the reign of Edward III., which was published in 1618. It is of little historical value, but is remarkable for the same simple ease and purity of language which distinguish Daniel’s verse. The contribution to this department of literature of all those that the early part of the seventeenth century produced, which is at the same time the most valuable as an original authority and the most masterly in its execution, is undoubtedly Bacon’s History of the reign of Henry VII.

The series of popular national chronicles was continued in this period, from the publication of Edward Hall’s ‘Union of the Two Noble and Illustrious Families of York and Lancaster,’ in 1548, by that of Richard Grafton’s ‘Chronicle at Large, down to the First Year of Queen Elizabeth,’ in 1569; of Raphael Holinshed’s ‘Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland,’ in 1577; and by the various publications of the laborious antiquaries John Stow and John Speed; namely, Stow’s ‘Summary of the English Chronicles,’ of which he published many editions between 1565 and 1598; his ‘Annals,’ also frequently reprinted with corrections and enlargements between 1573 and 1600; his ‘Survey of London,’ first published in 1598, and again with additions in 1603; and Speed’s ‘Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain,’ 1606; and his ‘History of Great

\* Lit. of Eur. iii. 666.

Britain,' coming down to the accession of James I., 1614. These various works of Stow and Speed rank among the head sources or fountains of our knowledge in the department of national antiquities.

## CLASSICAL LEARNING.

With the exception of a magnificent edition of Chrysostom, in eight volumes folio, by Sir Henry Savile, printed at Eton, where Savile was provost of the College, in 1612, scarcely any great work in the department of ancient scholarship appeared in England during this period. It, however, produced a number of works written in Latin by Englishmen, which still retain more or less celebrity; among others, the illustrious Camden's *Britannia*, first published in 1586, but not enlarged to the form in which its author ultimately left it till the appearance of the sixth edition, in 1607; the same writer's 'Annales Rerum Anglicarum regnante Elizabetha,' the first part of which was printed in 1615, the sequel not till after Camden's death; John Barclay's two political romances of the 'Euphormio,' the first part of which was published in 1603, and the more famous 'Argenis,' 1621; and Lord Herbert's treatise 'De Veritate,' 1624.

THE END OF VOL. III.

## CORRIGENDA IN VOL. I.

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Page 17, last line, *for* he tells us, *read* Leland tells us.

“ 21, line 7 from bottom, *read* of Charlemagne, some of the most eminent were Irish. Alcuin, the chief ornament of the imperial court, and who presided over the Palatine School, out of which arose the university of Paris, was no doubt an Englishman, having probably been born, where he tells us he received his education, at York. But it is related that, two learned Scots from Ireland having also arrived in his dominions, the emperor detained one of them, named Clement, to serve as a director of education in France, and sent the other with a similar appointment to Italy. Somewhat later we find

“ 55, line 7, *for* Negel Wircker, *read* Nigel Wireker; and *dele* foot note.

“ 60, line 8 from bottom, *for* Couches, *read* Conches.

“ 73, line 3, *for* Hanvil, *read* Hauvil.

“ 115, line 9 from bottom, *for* north-west, *read* north-east.

“ 156, line 3 from bottom, *dele* supposed.

“ 211, line 21, *for* very corrupt, *read* somewhat.

“ 212, line 4, *dele* It is very possibly not so ancient by a hundred years.

SKETCHES OF THE HISTORY  
OF  
LITERATURE AND LEARNING  
IN ENGLAND.

WITH SPECIMENS OF THE PRINCIPAL WRITERS.

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BY GEO. L. CRAIK, M.A.

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SERIES SECOND (IN TWO VOLUMES).

FROM THE ACCESSION OF ELIZABETH TO  
THE REVOLUTION OF 1688.

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## BOOK VI.

## LITERATURE OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

EXCLUDING from our view the productions of the last fifty or sixty years, as not yet ripe for the verdict of history, we may affirm that our National Literature, properly so called, that is, whatever of our literature by right of its poetic shape or spirit is to be held as peculiarly belonging to the language and the country, had its noon-day in the space of time to which our last Book was chiefly dedicated, or that comprehended within the last quarter of the sixteenth and the first of the seventeenth century. But a splendid afternoon flush succeeded this meridian blaze, which may be said to have lasted for another half century, or longer. Down almost to the Revolution, or at least to the middle of the reign of Charles II., our higher literature continued to glow with more or less of the coloured light and the heart of fire which it had acquired in the age of Elizabeth and James. Some of the greatest of it indeed—as the verse of Milton and the prose poetry of Jeremy Taylor—was not given to the world till towards the close of the space we have just indicated. But Milton, and Taylor, and Sir Thomas Browne, and Cudworth, and Henry More, and Cowley, the most eminent of our English writers in the interval from the Restoration to the Revolution (if we except

Dryden, the founder of a new school, and Barrow, whose writings, full as they are of thought, have not much of the poetical or untranslatable) were all of them, it is worthy of observation, born before the close of the reign of James I. Nor would the stormy time that followed be without its nurture for such minds. A boyhood or youth passed in the days of Shakspeare and Bacon, and a manhood in those of the Great Rebellion, was a training which could not fail to rear high powers to their highest capabilities.

#### SHIRLEY, AND THE END OF THE OLD DRAMA.

The chief glory of our Elizabethan literature, however, belongs almost exclusively to the time we have already gone over. The only other name that remains to be mentioned to complete our sketch of the great age of the Drama, is that of James Shirley, who was born about the year 1594, and whose first play, the comedy of *The Wedding*, was published in 1629. He is the author of about forty dramatic pieces which have come down to us. "Shirley," observes Lamb, "claims a place among the worthies of this period, not so much for any transcendent genius in himself, as that he was the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and notions in common. A new language and quite a new turn of tragic and comic interest came in with the Restoration."\* Of this writer, who survived till 1666, we shall avail ourselves of the account that has been given, in a few comprehensive words, by Mr. Hallam:—"Shirley has

\* *Specimens*, ii. 119.

no originality, no force in conceiving or delineating character, little of pathos, and less, perhaps, of wit; his dramas produce no deep impression in reading, and of course can leave none in the memory. But his mind was poetical: his better characters, especially females, express pure thoughts in pure language; he is never timid or affected, and seldom obscure; the incidents succeed rapidly; the personages are numerous, and there is a general animation in the scenes, which causes us to read him with some pleasure."\*

A preface by Shirley is prefixed to the first collection of part of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, which, as already mentioned, appeared in 1647. "Now, reader," he says, "in this tragical age, where the theatre hath been so much outacted, congratulate thy own happiness that, in this silence of the stage, thou hast a liberty to read these inimitable plays,—to dwell and converse in these immortal groves,—which were only showed our fathers in a conjuring-glass, as suddenly removed as represented." At this time all theatrical amusements were prohibited; and the publication of these and of other dramatic productions which were their property, or rather the sale of them to the booksellers, was resorted to by the players as a way of making a little money when thus cut off from the regular gains of their profession; the eagerness of the public to possess the said works in print being of course also sharpened by the same cause. Before the commencement of the civil war there appear to have been no fewer than five different companies of public players in London:—1. That called the King's Company (the same that Shakspeare had belonged

\* *Lit. of Eur.*, iii. 617.

to), which acted at the *Globe*, on the *Bankside* in *Southwark*, in the summer, and at the *Blackfriars Theatre* in winter. 2. The Queen's Players, who occupied the *Cockpit* (or the *Phœnix*, as it was also called), in *Drury Lane*, the origin of the present *Theatre Royal* there. 3. The Prince's Players, who played at the *Fortune Theatre*, in *Golden* or *Golding Lane*, in the parish of *St. Giles, Cripplegate*. 4. The *Salisbury Court Company*. 5. The *Children of the Revels*, who are supposed to have performed at the theatre called the *Red Bull*, at the upper end of *St. John's Street*. It had been usual to shut up the theatres when the plague was in *London*, with the view of preventing such concourses of the people as it was thought might help to spread the disease, and on such occasions the players were wont to go down and act in the provinces; but their absence from town when protracted beyond a few weeks was very impatiently borne. In May, 1636, when the plague was raging with great violence, an order was issued by the *privy council*, forbidding the representation of all "stage-plays, interludes, shows, and spectacles;" and the prohibition was not removed till the end of *February* in the following year. In the mean time, it appears, the craving of the public for their customary enjoyment, in one shape if not in another, had tempted certain booksellers to print a number of plays, surreptitiously procured, as we learn from an edict of the *lord chamberlain*, addressed to the *Stationers' Company*, in June, 1637, in which he states that complaints to that effect had been made to him by the players, the legal proprietors of those "books of comedies, tragedies, interludes, histories, and the like, which they had (for the special

service of his majesty and for their own use) bought and provided at very dear and high rates." The players added, that, by these unfair publications, "not only they themselves had much prejudice, but the books much corruption, to the injury and disgrace of the authors."\* At this time the most favourite acting plays were in general carefully withheld from the press by the theatrical companies whose property they were; and the only way in which a perusal of them could be obtained was by paying a considerable sum for a loan of the manuscript or a transcript of it. Humphrey Moseley, the publisher of the collection of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays in 1647, after observing, in his prefatory address, that his charges in bringing out the volume had been very great, seeing that the owners of the manuscripts too well knew their value to make a cheap estimate of any of them, adds, "Heretofore, when gentlemen desired but a copy of any of these plays, the meanest piece here (if any may be called mean where every one is best) cost them more than four times the price you pay for the whole volume." The missing comedy of *The Wild Goose Chase* had been lost, he tells us in another passage, by being borrowed from the actors many years before by a person of quality, and, owing to the neglect of a servant, never returned. Sometimes, too, it appears from another of his remarks, an individual actor would write out his part for a private friend, or probably for any one who would pay him for it.

The permanent suppression of theatrical entertainments was the act of the Long Parliament. An ordinance

\* See the edict in Chalmers's *Apology for the Believers in the Shakespeare Papers*, p. 513.

of the Lords and Commons passed on the 2nd of September, 1642,—after setting forth that “public sports do not well agree with public calamities, nor public stage-plays with the seasons of humiliation, this being an exercise of sad and pious solemnity, and the other being spectacles of pleasure, too commonly expressing lascivious mirth and levity”—ordained, “that, while these sad causes and set times of humiliation do continue, public stage-plays shall cease and be forborne.” It has been plausibly conjectured that this measure originated, “not merely in a spirit of religious dislike to dramatic performances, but in a politic caution, lest play-writers and players should avail themselves of their power over the minds of the people to instil notions and opinions hostile to the authority of a puritanical parliament.”\* This ordinance certainly put an end at once to the regular performance of plays; but it is known to have been occasionally infringed; and there is reason to believe that after a few years it began to be pretty frequently and openly disregarded. This would appear to have been the case from a new ordinance of the Lords and Commons published in October, 1647, entitled, “For the better suppression of stage-plays, interludes, and common players,” by which the lord mayor, justices of the peace, and sheriffs of the city of London and Westminster, and of the counties of Middlesex and Surrey, were authorised and required to enter into all houses and other places within their jurisdiction where stage-plays were acted, and to seize the players and commit them for trial at the next sessions, “there to be punished as rogues, according to law.” On the 22nd of January following, however,

\* Collier, *Hist. Dram. Poet.*, ii. 106.

the House of Commons was informed that many stage-plays were still acted in various places in the city of London and in the county of Middlesex, notwithstanding this ordinance. The subject was then taken up with furious zeal both by Commons and Lords ; and, after a great bustle of message-sending, debating, and consulting in committees, an act was agreed upon and published on the 11th of February, 1648, which, after declaring stage-plays, interludes, and common plays to be “ condemned by ancient heathens, and much less to be tolerated amongst professors of the Christian religion,” and denouncing them as being “ the occasion of many and sundry great vices and disorders, tending to the high provocation of God’s wrath and displeasure, which lies heavy upon this kingdom, and to the disturbance of the peace thereof,” proceeded to ordain—first, that all players should be taken to be rogues within the meaning of the statutes of the 39th of Elizabeth and 7th of James ; secondly, that the authorities of the city of London and counties of Middlesex and Surrey should “ pull down and demolish, or cause and procure to be pulled down and demolished, all stage galleries, seats, and boxes, erected or used, or which shall be erected or used, for the acting or playing, or seeing acted or played,” any species of theatrical performance within their jurisdictions ; thirdly, that convicted players should be punished for the first offence with open and public whipping, and, for the second, should be dealt with according to law as incorrigible rogues ; fourthly, that all the money collected from the spectators of any stage-plays should be seized for the use of the poor of the parish ; and, lastly, that every person present at a--

such performance should forfeit the sum of five shillings to the use of the poor. Even this severe measure was not perfectly effectual ; for, in the following September, we find the House of Commons appointing a provost-marshall, with authority, among other things, “to seize upon all ballad-singers, sellers of malignant pamphlets, and to send them to the several militias, and to suppress stage-plays.” And, more than a year after this, namely, in December, 1649, it is noted by Whitelock that “some stage-players in St. John’s Street were apprehended by troopers, their clothes taken away, and themselves carried to prison.” It appears, also, that in some of the country parts of the kingdom strolling players continued for some years to set the law at defiance, and to be connived at in their disregard of it. At so late a date as February, 1654, it is recorded that plays were performed by a company of strollers at Witney and other places in Oxfordshire.\* It is, perhaps, more probable, however, that the statute had only in course of time come to be less rigidly enforced, than that it had been thus violated from the first. We are informed by the historians of the stage, that, though the public exhibition of stage-plays in London was effectually put down by the act of 1648, yet the players “ still kept together, and, by connivance of the commanding officer at Whitehall, sometimes represented privately a few plays at a short distance from town.” They also, it is added, were permitted to act at the country-houses of some of the nobility ; and even obtained leave at particular festivals to resume their

\* See the facts connected with the shutting of the theatres for the first time accurately stated in Mr. Collier’s History, ii. 104—119.

public performances at the Red Bull. Finally, we are told, “amidst the gloom of fanaticism, and whilst the Royal cause was considered as desperate, Sir William Davenant, without molestation, exhibited entertainments of declamation and music, after the manner of the ancients, at Rutland House. He began in the year 1656, and two years afterwards removed to the Cockpit, Drury Lane, where he performed until the eve of the Restoration.”\* Rutland House was in Charter House Square; and it is said that Davenant’s performances there were countenanced by Whitelock, Sir John Maynard, and other persons of influence. At first he called his representations operas; but, at length growing bolder, it is affirmed he wrote and caused to be acted several regular plays.†

## GILES FLETCHER.—PHINEAS FLETCHER.

Nor is the poetical produce other than dramatic of the quarter of a century that elapsed from the death of James to the establishment of the Commonwealth, of very considerable amount. Giles and Phineas Fletcher were brothers, cousins of the dramatist, and both clergymen. Giles, who died in 1623, is the author of a poem entitled ‘Christ’s Victory and Triumph in Heaven and Earth over and after Death,’ which was published in a quarto volume in 1610. It is divided into four parts, and is written in

\* View of the Rise and Progress of the English Stage, prefixed to Reed’s edition of Baker’s *Biographia Dramatica*, p. xxii. Mr. Collier (ii. 119) says: “The performance of Davenant’s ‘opera,’ as he himself calls it, of *The Siege of Rhodes*, in 1656, is to be looked upon as the first step towards the revival of dramatic performances.”

† Biog. Dram., ii. 15.

stanzas somewhat like those of Spenser, only containing eight lines each instead of nine; both the Fletchers, indeed, were professed disciples and imitators of the great author of the *Fairy Queen*. Phineas, who survived till 1650, published in 1633, along with a small collection of Piscatory Elegies and other Poetical Miscellanies, a long allegorical poem, entitled *The Purple Island*, in twelve books or cantos, written in a stanza of seven lines. The idea upon which this performance is founded is one of the most singular that ever took possession of the brain even of an allegorist: the *purple island* is nothing else than the human body, and the poem is, in fact, for the greater part, a system of anatomy, nearly as minute in its details as if it were a scientific treatise, but wrapping up everything in a fantastic guise of double meaning, so as to produce a languid sing-song of laborious riddles, which are mostly unintelligible without the very knowledge they make a pretence of conveying. After he has finished his anatomical course, the author takes up the subject of psychology, which he treats in the same luminous and interesting manner. Such a work as this has no claim to be considered a poem even of the same sort with the *Fairy Queen*. In Spenser, the allegory, whether historical or moral, is little more than formal: the poem, taken in its natural and obvious import, as a tale of "knights' and ladies' gentle deeds"—a song of their "fierce wars and faithful loves"—has meaning and interest enough, without the allegory at all, which, indeed, except in a very few passages, is so completely concealed behind the direct narrative, that we may well suppose it to have been nearly as much lost sight of and forgotten by the poet himself as it is by his readers: here, the alle-

gory is the soul of every stanza and of every line—that which gives to the whole work whatever meaning, and consequently whatever poetry, it possesses—with which, indeed, it is sometimes hard enough to be understood, but without which it would be absolute inanity and nonsense. The Purple Island is rather a production of the same species with Dr. Darwin's Botanic Garden ; but, forced and false enough as Darwin's style is in many respects, it would be doing an injustice to his poem to compare it with Phineas Fletcher's, either in regard to the degree in which nature and propriety are violated in the principle and manner of the composition, or in regard to the spirit and general success of the execution. Of course, there is a good deal of ingenuity shown in Fletcher's poem ; and it is not unimpregnated by poetic feeling, nor without some passages of considerable merit. But in many other parts it is quite grotesque ; and, on the whole, it is fantastic, puerile, and wearisome. Mr. Hallam thinks that Giles Fletcher, in his poem of Christ's Victory and Triumph, has shown more vigour than Phineas,\* “ but less sweetness, less smoothness, and more affectation in his style.”† It ought to be mentioned, however, to the honour of these two writers, that the works of both of them appear to have been studied by Milton, and that imitations of some passages in each are to be traced in his poetry. Milton was undoubtedly a diligent reader of the English poetry of the age preceding his own ; and his predecessors of all degrees, Ben Jonson and Fletcher the dramatists, as well as the two cousins of the latter, and, as we have seen, Joshua Sylvester and

\* Called, by mistake, his *elder* brother.

† *Lit. of Eur.*, iii. 487.

the earlier dramatic writer, George Peele, had contributed something to the awakening or directing of his feeling for the grand and beautiful, and to the forming of his melodious and lofty note.

OTHER RELIGIOUS POETS.—QUARLES.—HERBERT.—  
HERRICK.—CRASHAW.

The growth of the religious spirit in the early part of the seventeenth century is shown in much more of the poetry of the time as well as in that of the two Fletchers. Others of the most notable names of this age are Quarles, Herrick, Herbert, and Crashaw. Francis Quarles, who died in 1644, was one of the most popular as well as voluminous writers of the day, and is still generally known by his volume of 'Emblems.' His verses are characterised by ingenuity rather than fancy, but, although often absurd, he is seldom dull or languid. There is a good deal of spirit and coarse vigour in some of his pieces, as for instance in his well-known Song of Anar-chus, portions of which have been printed both by Ellis and Campbell, and which may perhaps have suggested to Cowper, the great religious poet of a later day, his lines called The Modern Patriot. Quarles, however, though he appears to have been a person of considerable literary acquirement, must in his poetical capacity be regarded as mainly a writer for the populace. George Herbert, a younger brother of the celebrated Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury, was a clergyman. His volume, entitled 'The Temple,' was first published soon after his death in 1633, and was at least six or seven times reprinted in the course of the next quarter of a century. His biographer, Izaak Walton, tells us that

when he wrote, in the reign of Charles II., twenty thousand copies of it had been sold. Herbert was an intimate friend of Donne, and no doubt a great admirer of his poetry; but his own has been to a great extent preserved from the imitation of Donne's peculiar style, into which it might in other circumstances have fallen, in all probability by its having been composed with little effort or elaboration, and chiefly to relieve and amuse his own mind by the melodious expression of his favourite fancies and contemplations. His quaintness lies in his thoughts rather than in their expression, which is in general sufficiently simple and luminous. Robert Herrick, who was also a clergyman, is the author of a thick octavo volume of verse, published in 1648, under the title of 'Hesperides.' It consists, like the poetry of Donne, partly of love verses, partly of pieces of a devotional character, or, as the two sorts are styled in the title-page, 'Works Human and Divine.' The same singular licence which even the most reverend persons, and the purest and most religious minds, in that age allowed themselves to take in light and amatory poetry, is found in Herrick as well as in Donne, a good deal of whose singular manner and fondness for conceits, both of sound and sense, Herrick has also caught. Yet some both of his hymns and of his anacreontics—for of such strange intermixture does his poetry consist—are beautifully simple and natural, and full of grace as well as fancy.\* Richard Crashaw was another clergyman, who late in life became a Roman

\* A small selection from Herrick's poetry was published at London a few years ago; and a complete reprint of the *Hesperides* was brought out at Edinburgh in 2 vols., 8vo., in 1823.

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Catholic, and died a canon of Loretto in 1650. He is perhaps, after Donne, the greatest of these religious poets of the early part of the seventeenth century. He belongs in manner to the same school with Donne and Herrick, and in his lighter pieces he has much of their lyrical sweetness and delicacy ; but there is often a force and even occasionally what may be called a grandeur of imagination in his more solemn poetry which Herrick never either reaches or aspires to.\*

CARTWRIGHT—RANDOLPH—CORBET.

All the poetical clergymen of this time, however, had not such pious muses. The Rev. William Cartwright, who died at an early age in 1643, is said by Anthony Wood to have been “ a most florid and serpentine preacher ;” but his poetry, which is mostly amatory, is not remarkable for its brilliancy. He is the author of several plays, and he was one of the young writers who were honoured with the title of his sons by Ben Jonson, who said of him, “ My son Cartwright writes all like a man.” Another of Ben’s poetical sons was Thomas Randolph, who was likewise a clergyman, and is also the author of several plays, mostly in verse, as well as of a quantity of other poetry. Randolph has a good deal of fancy, and his verse flows very melodiously ; but his poetry has in general a bookish and borrowed air. Much of it is on subjects of love and gallantry ; but the love is

\* Upon the subject of these and other religious poets of the seventeenth century, see ‘Lives of Sacred Poets, by Robert Aris Willmott, Esq.,’ 12mo. Lon. 1834 ; and an article on ‘The Character and Progress of Religious Poetry’ in the Church of England Quarterly Review for January, 1837, No. I. pp. 171—229.

chiefly of the head, or, at most, of the senses—the gallantry, it is easy to see, that merely of a fellow of a college and a reader of Ovid. Randolph died under thirty in 1634, and his poems were first collected after his death by his brother. The volume, which also contains his Plays, was frequently reprinted in the course of the next thirty or forty years; the edition before us, dated 1668, is called the fifth.

One of the most remarkable among the clerical poets of this earlier half of the seventeenth century was Dr. Richard Corbet, successively Bishop of Oxford and of Norwich. Corbet, who was born in 1582, became famous both as a poet and as a wit early in the reign of James; but very little, if any, of his poetry was published till after his death, which took place in 1635. The first edition of his Poems appeared in 1647, and there were others in 1648 and 1672; but the most complete collection of what he has left us is that published by the late Octavius Gilchrist in 1807. A notion of what sort of man Bishop Corbet was may be gathered from some anecdotes of him preserved by Aubrey, who relates, among other things, that after he was a doctor of divinity he sang ballads at the Cross at Abingdon: “On a market day,” Aubrey writes, “he and some of his comrades were at the tavern by the Cross (which, by the way, was then the finest in England; I remember it when I was a freshman; it was admirable curious Gothic architecture, and fine figures in the niches; 'twas one of those built by King . . . . for his queen). The ballad-singer complained he had no custom—he could not put off his ballads. The jolly doctor puts off his gown, and puts on the ballad-singer's leathern jacket, and, being

a handsome man, and a rare full voice, he presently vended a great many, and had a great audience." Aubrey had heard, however, that as a bishop "he had an admirable grave and venerable aspect." Corbet's poetry, too, is a mixture or alternation of gravity and drollery. But it is the subject or occasion, rather than the style or manner, that makes the difference ; he never rises to any thing higher than wit ; and he is as witty in his elegies as in his ballads. As that ingredient, however, is not so suitable for the former as for the latter, his graver performances are worth very little. Nor is his merriment of a high order ; when it is most elaborate it is strained and fantastic, and when more natural it is apt to run into buffoonery. But much of his verse, indeed, is merely prose in rhyme, and very indifferent rhyme for the most part. His happiest effusions are the two that are best known, his Journey into France and his ballad of The Fairies' Farewell. His longest and most curious poem is his Iter Boreale, describing a journey which he took in company with other three university men, probably about 1620, from Oxford as far north as Newark and back again. Two lines in this piece might almost pass for having suggested Byron's couplet in *Don Juan*,

Let not a monument give you or me hopes,  
Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops :

Corbet, moralizing upon the tombless grave of Wolsey at Leicester, exclaims :—

If thou art thus neglected, what shall we  
Hope after death, who are but shreds of thee ?

At a village near Loughborough our travellers were obliged to procure a guide to conduct them through the

intricacies of that unknown country to Bosworth ; and next morning the landlord of the inn in which they passed the night in the latter town mounted his horse and accompanied them to the neighbouring battle-field. Then comes a passage of some interest :—

Mine host was full of ale and history ;  
 And on the morrow, when he brought us nigh  
 Where the two Roses joined, you would suppose  
 Chaucer ne'er made the Romaunt of the Rose.  
 Hear him—‘ See ye yon wood ? There Richard lay  
 With his whole army : look the other way,  
 And to where Richmond in a bed of gorse  
 Encamped himself ere night, and all his force.  
 Upon this hill they met.’ Why, he could tell  
 The inch where Richmond stood, where Richard fell.  
 Beside what of his knowledge he could say,  
 He had authentic notice from the play ;  
 Which I might guess by his mustering up the ghosts  
 And policies not incident to hosts ;  
 But chiefly by that one perspicuous thing,  
 Where he mistook a player for a king ;  
 For when he would have said, King Richard died,  
 And called—A horse ! a horse ! he Burbage cried.

From this passage we learn, not only, as has been remarked, that Shakspeare’s Richard III. was originally represented by the famous fellow-actor of the poet, Richard Burbage, but also that both the play and the performers were already familiarly known in the country as well as in London. It may be supposed indeed that the town of Bosworth would be one of the first places in which this particular drama was represented out of the metropolis. .

As a sample of Corbet’s humour, we may give his description of the landlady of their inn at Warwick :—

Oh, there an hostess was,  
 To whom the Castle and the Dun Cow are  
 Sights after dinner ; she is morning ware.

Her whole behaviour borrowed was and mixed,  
 Half fool, half puppet, and her face betwixt  
 Measure and jig ; her curtsey was an honour ;  
 Her gait, as if her neighbour had outgone her.  
 She was barred up in whalebones, which do leese  
 None of the whale's length, for they reached her knees.  
 Off with her head, and then she hath a middle :  
 As her waist stands she looks like the new fiddle,  
 The favourite Theorbo, truth to tell ye,  
 Whose neck and throat are deeper than the belly.  
 Have you seen monkeys chained about the loins,  
 Or pottle-pots with rings ? Just so she joins  
 Herself together : a dressing she doth love  
 In a small print below and text above.  
 What though her name be King, yet 'tis no treason,  
 Nor breach of statute, for to ask the reason  
 Of her branched ruff, a cubit every poke.  
 I seem to wound her, but she strook the stroke  
 At our departure ; and our worships there  
 Paid for our titles dear as any where.

This, then, was harder fortune than they met with in a previous instance, where, if the charge was rather high, the personal attractions of the landlady afforded some compensation in the eyes of the four Oxford clerks :—

'Twas quickly morning, though by our short stay  
 We could not find that we had less to pay.  
 All travellers, this heavy judgment hear :—  
 A handsome hostess makes the reckoning dear ;  
 Her smiles, her words, your purses must requite 'em,  
 And every welcome from her adds an item.

We will add the picture of a dignified clergyman, well beneficed and well fed, whom they met in the company of Sir Fulk Greville (soon after created Lord Brooke) at Warwick Castle, and who is understood to be the Reverend Samuel Burton, Archdeacon of Gloucester :—

With him there was a prelate, by his place  
 Archdeacon to the bishop, by his face  
 A greater man ; for that did counterfect  
 Lord abbott of some covent standing yet ;

A corpulent relique ; marry and 'tis sin  
Some puritan gets not his face called in :  
Amongst lean brethren it may scandal bring,  
Who seek for parity in every thing.  
For us, let him enjoy all that God sends,  
Plenty of flesh, of livings, and of friends.

There was not a drop of gall in the merry-hearted bishop ; but, as may be supposed, he had but small respect for puritans or puritanism, and he never loses an opportunity of a good-natured gibe at them or it.

POETS OF THE FRENCH SCHOOL.—CAREW.—LOVELACE.—  
SUCKLING.

Both our poetry and our prose eloquence continued to be generally infected by the spirit of quaintness and conceit, or over-refinement and subtlety of thought, for nearly a century after the first introduction among us of that fashion of writing. Even some of the highest minds did not entirely escape the contagion. If nothing of it is to be found in Spenser or Milton, neither Shakspeare nor Bacon is altogether free from it. Of our writers of an inferior order, it took captive not only the greater number, but some of the greatest, who lived and wrote from the middle of the reign of Elizabeth to nearly the middle of that of Charles II.—from Bishop Andrews, whom we have already mentioned in prose, and Donne both in prose and verse, to Cowley inclusive. The style in question appears to have been borrowed from Italy ; it came in, at least, with the study and imitation of the Italian poetry, being caught apparently from the school of Petrarch, or rather of his later followers, about the same time that a higher inspiration was drawn from Tasso and Ariosto. It is observable that the species or departments of our poetry which it chiefly in-

vaded were those which have always been more or less influenced by foreign models: it made comparatively little impression upon our dramatic poetry, the most truly native portion of our literature; but our lyrical and elegiac, our didactic and satirical verse, was overrun and materially modified by it, as we have said, for nearly a whole century. The return to a more natural manner, however, was begun to be made long before the expiration of that term. And, as we had received the malady from one foreign literature, so we were indebted for the cure to another. It is commonly assumed that our modern English poetry first evinced a disposition to imitate that of France after the Restoration. But the truth is that the influence of French literature had begun to be felt by our own at a considerably earlier date. The court of Charles I. was far from being so thoroughly French as that of Charles II.; but the connexion established between the two kingdoms through Queen Henrietta could not fail to produce a partial imitation of French models both in writing and in other things. The distinguishing characteristic of French poetry (and indeed of French art generally), neatness in the dressing of the thought, had already been carried to considerable height by Malherbe, Racan, Malleville, and others; and these writers are doubtless to be accounted the true fathers of our own Waller, Carew, Lovelace, and Suckling, who all began to write about this time, and whose verses may be said to have first exemplified in our lighter poetry what may be done by correct and natural expression, smoothness of flow, and all that lies in the *ars celare artem*—the art of making art itself seem nature. Of the four, Waller was perhaps first in the field;

but he survived almost till the Revolution, and did not rise to his greatest celebrity till after the Restoration, so that he will more fitly fall to be noticed in a subsequent page. The other three all belong exclusively to the times of Charles I. and of the Commonwealth.

Thomas Carew, styled on the title-page “One of the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, and Sewer in Ordinary to His Majesty,” is the author of a small volume of poetry first printed in 1640, the year after his death. In polish and evenness of movement, combined with a diction elevated indeed in its tone, as it must needs be by the very necessities of verse, above that of mere good conversation, but yet in ease, lucidity, and directness rivalling the language of ordinary life, Carew’s poetry is not inferior to Waller’s; and, while his expression is as correct and natural, and his numbers as harmonious, the music of his verse is richer, and his imagination is warmer and more florid. But the texture of his composition is in general extremely slight; the substance of most of his pieces consists merely of the elaboration of some single idea; and, if he has more tenderness than Waller, he is far from having so much dignity, variety, or power of sustained effort. His songs beginning “He that loves a rosy cheek,” and “Ask me no more where Jove bestows, when June is past, the fading rose,” are in all the collections of extracts; the following is less hackneyed:—

Amongst the myrtles as I walked,  
Love and my sighs thus intertalked :  
‘ Tell me,’ said I, in deep distress,  
‘ Where may I find my shepherdess ?’  
‘ Thou fool,’ said Love, ‘ know’st thou not this,  
In every thing that’s good she is ?

In yonder tulip go and seek ;  
There thou may'st find her lip, her cheek.

In yon enamoured pansy by ;  
There thou shalt have her curious eye.  
In bloom of peach, in rosy bud ;  
There wave the streamers of her blood.

In brightest lilies that there stand,  
The emblems of her whiter hand.  
In yonder rising hill there smell  
Such sweets as in her bosom dwell.'

' "Tis true,' said I : and thereupon  
I went to pluck them one by one,  
To make of parts a union ;  
But on a sudden all was gone.

With that I stopt : said Love, ' These be,  
Fond man, resemblances of thee ;  
And, as these flowers, thy joys shall die,  
Even in the twinkling of an eye ;  
And all thy hopes of her shall wither,  
Like these short sweets thus knit together.' "

This may seem sufficiently artificial, and no doubt is so ; and, when the reader comes to the *streamers* of the fair lady's blood *waving* in the peach and the rose-bud, he may be disposed to demur to the claim of Carew to be reputed above the seductions of a striking metaphor, however violent or eccentric. But the distinction of this French school of poetry is certainly not that it altogether eschews conceits and false thoughts ; on the contrary, it is decidedly addicted to what is brilliant in preference to what is true and deep, and its system of composition is essentially one of point and artifice ; but all this is still to a certain extent in subordination to the principles and laws of good writing ; the conceit is always reduced at least to fair rhetorical sound and shape ; it is not made alone the substitute for every other attraction, the apo-

logy and compensation for every other vice of style, the prime ingredient and almost only thing needful in the composition ; when the thought is false and absurd it is not tortured into still greater absurdity and grotesqueness by the perpetration of all sorts of violence upon the words.

There is more quaintness, however, in the poetry of Lovelace than in that of Carew. The poems of Colonel Richard Lovelace are contained in two small volumes, one entitled 'Lucasta,' published in 1649 ; the other entitled 'Posthume Poems,' published by his brother in 1659, the year after the author's death.\* They consist principally of songs and other short pieces. Lovelace's songs, which are mostly amatory, are many of them carelessly enough written, and there are very few of them not defaced by some harshness or deformity ; but a few of his best pieces are as sweetly versified as Carew's, with perhaps greater variety of fancy as well as more of vital force ; and a tone of chivalrous gentleness and honour gives to some of them a pathos beyond the reach of any mere poetic art. He has written nothing else, however, nearly so exquisite as his well-known lines to Althea in prison ; and therefore, familiar as that song is likely to be to most of our readers, it would be unfair to substitute any other specimen of his poetry :—

" When love with unconfined wings  
 Hovers within my gates,  
 And my divine Althea brings  
 To whisper at the grates ;

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\* Reprints of both have been produced by Mr. Singer ; 12mo. Chiswick, 1817, and 1818.

When I lie tangled in her hair,  
 And fettered to her eye ;  
 The birds\* that wanton in the air  
 Know no such liberty.

When flowing cups run swiftly round,  
 With no allaying Thames,  
 Our careless heads with roses bound,  
 Our hearts with loyal flames ;  
 When thirsty grief in wine we steep,  
 When healths and draughts go free,  
 Fishes that tipple in the deep  
 Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I  
 With shriller throat shall sing  
 The sweetness, mercy, majesty,  
 And glories of my King ;  
 When I shall voice aloud how good  
 He is, how great should be ;  
 Enlarged winds that curl the flood  
 Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,  
 Nor iron bars a cage ;  
 Minds innocent and quiet take  
 That for an hermitage :  
 If I have freedom in my love,  
 And in my soul am free,  
 Angels alone that soar above  
 Enjoy such liberty.

Scattered over Lovelace's poetry are a good many single expressions struck out by a true poetical feeling. Campbell has borrowed from him the line in his *Dream of the Exile*,

“ The sentinel stars set their watch in the sky ; ”  
 which in Lovelace is, in one of his addresses to *Lucasta*,  
 “ Like to the sentinel stars, I watch all night.”

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\* Misprinted “ Gods ” in the original edition.

Lovelace's days, darkened in their close by the loss of every thing except honour, were cut short at the age of forty ; his contemporary, Sir John Suckling, who moved gaily and thoughtlessly through his short life as through a dance or a merry game, died in 1641, at that of thirty-two. Suckling, who is the author of a small collection of poems, as well as of four plays, has none of the pathos of Lovelace or Carew ; but he equals them in fluency and natural grace of manner, and he has besides a sprightliness and buoyancy which is all his own. His poetry has a more impulsive air than theirs ; and though, in reference to the greater part of what he has produced, he must be classed along with them and Waller as an adherent to the French school of propriety and precision, some of the happiest of his effusions are remarkable for a cordiality and impetuosity of manner which has nothing foreign about it, but is altogether English, although there is not much resembling it in any of his predecessors any more than of his contemporaries, unless perhaps in some of Skelton's pieces. His famous ballad of The Wedding is the very perfection of gaiety and archness in verse ; and his Session of the Poets, in which he scatters about his wit and humour in a more careless style, may be considered as constituting him the founder of a species of satire, which Cleveland and Marvel and other subsequent writers carried into new applications, and which only expired among us with Swift. We cannot but give the Ballad, often as it has been printed. The subject is the marriage of Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill (afterwards Earl of Orrery), with the Lady Margaret Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk ; and the reader will admire the art with which grace and even poetry of

expression is preserved throughout along with the forms of speech, as well as of thought, natural to the rustic narrator :—

I tell thee, Dick, where I have been,  
Where I the rarest things have seen :  
    Oh things without compare !  
Such sights again cannot be found  
In any place on English ground,  
    Be it at wake or fair.

At Charing-Cross, hard by the way  
Where we, thou knowest, do sell our hay,  
    There is a house with stairs :  
And there did I see coming down  
Such folks as are not in our town,  
    Vorty at least, in pairs.

Amongst the rest, one pestilent fine  
(His beard no bigger, though, than thine)  
    Walked on before the rest :  
Our landlord looks like nothing to him ;  
The King (God bless him) 'twould undo him  
    Should he go still so drest.

At course-a-park, withouten doubt,  
He should have first been taken out  
    By all the maids i' the town ;  
Though lusty Roger there had been,  
Or little George upon the Green,  
    Or Vincent of the Crown.

But wot you what ? The youth was going  
To make an end of all his wooing ;  
    The parson for him staid ;  
Yet, by his leave, for all his haste,  
He did not so much wish all past,  
    Perchance, as did the maid.

The maid—and thereby hangs a tale—  
For such a maid no Whitsun ale

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<sup>b</sup> The present Northumberland House, then called Suffolk House, the seat of the lady's father.

Could ever yet produce ;  
 No grape that 's lusty ripe could be  
 So round, so plump, so soft as she,  
 Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring  
 Would not stay on which they did bring,  
 It was too wide a peck ;  
 And to say truth (for out it must)  
 It looked like the great collar, just,  
 About our young colt's neck.

Her feet beneath her petticoat  
 Like little mice stole in and out  
 As if they feared the light ;  
 But oh ! she dances such a way  
 No sun upon an Easter day\*  
 Is half so fine a sight.

He would have kissed her once or twice,  
 But she would not, she was so nice,  
 She would not do 't in sight ;  
 And then she looked as who should say,  
 I will do what I list to day,  
 And you shall do 't at night.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,  
 No daisy makes comparison ;  
 Who sees them is undone ;  
 For streaks of red were mingled there  
 Such as are on a Katharine pear,  
 The side that 's next the sun.

Her lips were red, and one was thin  
 Compared to that was next her chin ;  
 Some bee had stung it newly.  
 But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,  
 I durst no more upon them gaze  
 Than on the sun in July.

\* It was formerly believed that the sun danced on Easter-day. See Brand, 'Popular Antiquities' (edit. of 1841) I. 95 ; where the present verse is strangely quoted in illustration of this popular notion from "a rare book entitled 'Recreation for Ingenious Head Pieces,' &c., 8vo. Lon. 1667."

Her mouth so small when she does speak,  
 Thou 'dst swear her teeth her words did break  
 That they might passage get :  
 But she so handled still the matter,  
 They came as good as ours, or better,  
 And are not spent a whit.

Passion o' me ! how I run on !  
 There 's that that would be thought upon,  
 I trow, besides the bride :  
 The business of the kitchen 's great,  
 For it is fit that men should eat,  
 Nor was it there denied.

Just in the nick the cook knocked thrice,  
 And all the waiters in a trice  
 His summons did obey ;  
 Each serving-man with dish in hand  
 Marched boldly up, like our train-band,  
 Presented and away.

When all the meat was on the table,  
 What man of knife, or teeth, was able  
 To stay to be entreated ?  
 And this the very reason was,  
 Before the parson could say grace  
 The company was seated.

Now hats fly off, and youths carouse ;  
 Healths first go round, and then the house ;  
 The bride's came thick and thick ;  
 And, when 'twas named another's health,  
 Perhaps he made it her's by stealth,  
 And who could help it, Dick ?

O' the sudden up they rise and dance ;  
 Then sit again and sigh and glance ;  
 Then dance again and kiss :  
 Thus several ways the time did pass,  
 Whilst every woman wished her place,  
 And every man wished his.

By this time all were stolen aside  
 To counsel and undress the bride ;

But that he must not know :  
 But yet 'twas thought he gueased her mind,  
 And did not mean to stay behind  
 Above an hour or so.

When in he came, Dick, there she lay,  
 Like new-fallen snow melting away :  
 'Twas time, I trow, to part :  
 Kisses were now the only stay,  
 Which soon she gave, as who would say,  
 Good bye, with all my heart.

But, just as heavens would have to cross it,  
 In came the bride-maids with the posset :  
 The bride-groom ate in spite ;  
 For, had he left the women to 't,  
 It would have cost two hours to do 't,  
 Which were too much that night.

To this date belongs a remarkable poem, the 'Cooper's Hill' of Sir John Denham, first published in 1642. It immediately drew universal attention. Denham, however, had the year before made himself known as a poet by his tragedy of *The Sophy*, on the appearance of which Waller remarked that he had broken out like the Irish rebellion, threescore thousand strong, when nobody was aware or in the least suspected it. Cooper's Hill may be considered as belonging in point of composition to the same school with Sir John Davies's *Nosce Teipsum*; and, if it has not all the concentration of that poem, it is equally pointed, correct, and stately, with, partly owing to the subject, a warmer tone of imagination and feeling, and a fuller swell of verse. The spirit of the same classical style pervades both; and they are the two greatest

poems in that style which had been produced down to the date at which we are now arrived. Denham is the author of a number of other compositions in verse, and especially of some songs and other shorter pieces, several of which are very spirited ; but the fame of his principal poem has thrown everything else he has written into the shade. It is remarkable that many biographical notices of this poet make him to have survived nearly till the Revolution, and relate various stories of the miseries of his protracted old age ; when the fact is, that he died in 1668, at the age of fifty-three.\*

#### CLEVELAND.

But, of all the cavalier poets, the one who did his cause the heartiest and stoutest service, and who, notwithstanding much carelessness or ruggedness of execution, possessed perhaps, even considered simply as a poet, the richest and most various faculty, was John Cleveland, the most popular verse-writer of his own day, the most neglected of all his contemporaries ever since. Among the one hundred and sixty-one poets, from Robert of Gloucester to Sir Francis Fane, whose choicest relics

\* The readers of the 'Mémoires de Grammont' will remember the figure he makes in that work, where he is described as "Le Chevalier Denham, comblé de richesses, aussi bien que d'années," and as having for the first time entered into the marriage state, at the age of seventy-nine, with Miss Brook, a famous court beauty, then only eighteen. The fact is, that this was a second marriage, and that, whatever was the lady's age, Denham himself was then only about fifty. His load of riches is probably as much exaggerated by the lively historian of the Comte de Grammont as his load of years.

furnish out Ellis's three volumes of *Specimens*, the name of Cleveland does not occur. Nor is his poetry included either in Anderson's or in Chalmers's collection. Yet for nearly twenty years he was held to be the greatest among living English poets. Cleveland was the eldest son of the Rev. Thomas Cleveland, Vicar of Hinckley and Rector of Stoke in Leicestershire, and he was born at Loughborough in that county in 1613. Down to the breaking out of the civil war, he resided at St. John's College, Cambridge, of which he was a Fellow, and seems to have distinguished himself principally by his Latin poetry. But, when every man took his side, with whatever weapons he could wield, for king or parliament, Anthony Wood tells us that Cleveland was the first writer who came forth as a champion of the royal cause in English verse. To that cause he adhered till its ruin; at last in 1655, after having led for some years a fugitive life, he was caught and thrown into prison at Yarmouth; but, after a detention of a few months, Cromwell, on his petition, allowed him to go at large. The transaction was honourable to both parties: Cleveland's character, which may be mistaken by those who know him only from some of his unscrupulous *pasquinades* or other poetry, cannot be better painted than it is by himself in his address to the Protector: "I am induced," he said, "to believe that, next to my adherence to the royal party, the cause of my confinement is the narrowness of my estate; for none stand committed whose estates can bail them. I only am the prisoner, who have no acres to be my hostage. Now, if my poverty be criminal (with reverence be it spoken) I implead your Highness, whose victorious arms have reduced

me to it, as accessory to my guilt. Let it suffice, my Lord, that the calamity of the war hath made us poor: do not punish us for it." "I beseech your Highness," he goes on, "put some bounds to the overthrow, and do not pursue the chase to the other world. Can your thunder be levelled so low as to our grovelling condition? Can your towering spirit, which hath quarrelled upon kingdoms, make a stoop at us, who are the rubbish of these ruins? Methinks I hear your former achievements interceding with you not to sully your glories with trampling upon the prostrate, nor clog the wheel of your chariot with so degenerous a triumph. The most renowned heroes have ever with such tenderness cherished their captives that their swords did but cut out work for their courtesies." And again, "For the service of his Majesty, if it be objected, I am so far from excusing it, that I am ready to allege it in my vindication. I cannot conceit that my fidelity to my prince should taint me in your opinion; I should rather expect it should recommend me to your favour. . . . You see, my Lord, how much I presume upon the greatness of your spirit, that dare present my indictment with so frank a confession, especially in this, which I may so safely deny that it is almost arrogancy in me to own it; for the truth is, I was not qualified enough to serve him: all I could do was to bear a part in his sufferings, and to give myself to be crushed with his fall." "My Lord," he concludes, "you see my crimes; as to my defence, you bear it about you. I shall plead nothing in my justification but your Highness's clemency, which, as it is the constant inmate of a valiant breast, if you graciously be pleased to extend it to your suppliant, in taking me out of this

withering durance, your Highness will find that mercy will establish you more than power, though all the days of your life were as pregnant with victories as your twice auspicious Third of September." There is no artful flattery or coaxing in this: Cromwell would read in it something of a spirit akin to his own. But Cleveland did not long survive his release; he died in April, 1658, a few months before the Protector himself—like his brother loyalist poet Lovelace, who ended his days about the same time, snatched away just when the hated dominion that had been so fatal to his fortunes was about to break up and vanish from the land for ever.

Cleveland is commonly regarded as a mere dealer in satire and invective, and as having no higher qualities than a somewhat rude force and vehemence. His prevailing fault is a straining after vigour and concentration of expression; and few of his pieces are free from a good deal of obscurity, harshness, or other disfigurement, occasioned by this habit or tendency, working in association with an alert, ingenious, and fertile fancy, a neglect of and apparently a contempt for neatness of finish, and the turn for quaintness and quibbling characteristic of the school to which he belongs—for Cleveland must be considered as essentially one of the old wit poets. Most of his poems seem to have been thrown off in haste, and never to have been afterwards corrected or revised. There are, however, among them some that are not without vivacity and sprightliness; and others of his more solemn verses have all the dignity that might be expected from his prose letter to Cromwell.\*

\* Many poems, it is to be noted, are found in the common editions of Cleveland's works which are known not to be his.

The following stanzas are entitled 'The General Eclipse':—

Ladies, that gild the glittering noon,  
And by reflection mend his ray;  
Whose beauty makes the sprightly sun  
To dance, as upon Easter-day;<sup>a</sup>  
What are you, now the Queen's away?

Courageous eagles, who have whet  
Your eyes upon majestic light,  
And thence derived such martial heat

Thus, in the edition before us, 8vo. Lon. 1687, what are entitled the 'Additions,' from p. 200 to 265, including 'A Lenten Litany,' 'Content,' 'A Sing-song on Clarinda's Wedding,' 'Vituperium Uxorii,' and other remarkable pieces, are, it seems, copied *verbatim* from a volume entitled 'Ex Otio Negotium, or Martial his Epigrams Translated, with Sundry Poems and Fancies; by R. Fletcher.' 8vo. Lon. 1656. And other pieces in the same Second Part of the Collection, entitled 'John Cleveland's Revived Poems, Orations, Epistles, and other of his genuine incomparable pieces, now at last published from his original copies by some of his intrusted friends,' are by Denham, J. Hall, Jasper Mayne, Thomas Weaver, and others. See 'A Select Collection of Poems, with Notes Biographical and Historical,' by J. Nichols, 1780-1-2; vol. vii. pp. 50 and 376. Several of Cleveland's poems are reprinted in his seventh volume by Mr. Nichols, who has there (pp. 10-13), and in vol. viii. pp. 308-311, given an account of the old poet; with whom, in the Dedication of his Collection to Dr. Percy (the editor of the Reliques) he claims a relationship, stating at the same time that Percy's grandmother by the father's side was a niece of Cleveland's. The original edition of Cleveland's works is dedicated to Francis Turner, D.D., Master of St. John's College, Cambridge (afterwards Bishop first of Rochester and then of Ely), by the editors J. L. and S. D., who appear to have been John Lake, D.D., Vicar of Leeds (afterwards Bishop of Chichester), who had been a pupil of Cleveland's at Cambridge, and Dr. Drake, Vicar of Pontefract.

<sup>a</sup> See note on Suckling's Ballad of The Wedding, ante, p. 31.

That still your looks maintain the fight ;  
 What are you, since the King's good night ?

Cavalier buds, whom nature teems  
 As a reserve for England's throne ;  
 Spirits whose double edge redeems  
 The last age, and adorns your own ;  
 What are you, now the Prince is gone ?

As an obstructed fountain's head  
 Cuts the entail off from the streams,  
 And brooks are disinherited ;  
 Honour and beauty are mere dreams,  
 Since Charles and Mary lost their beams.

Criminal valours ! who commit  
 Your gallantry ;<sup>e</sup> whose paean brings  
 A psalm of mercy after it ;  
 In this sad solstice of the king's,  
 Your victory hath mewed her wings.

The following Epitaph on Ben Jonson is the shortest and best of several tributes to the memory of that poet, with whose masculine genius that of Cleveland seems to have strongly sympathised :—

The Muses' fairest light in no dark time ;  
 The wonder of a learned age ; the line  
 Which none can pass ; the most proportioned wit  
 To nature ; the best judge of what was fit ;  
 The deepest, plainest, highest, clearest pen ;  
 The voice most echoed by consenting men ;  
 The soul which answered best to all well said  
 By others, and which most requital made ;  
 Tuned to the highest key of ancient Rome,  
 Returning all her music with his own ;

\* The meaning here may perhaps be illustrated by a line in one of our poet's elegies on Ben Jonson :—

“ No foul, loose line did prostitute thy wit ;  
 Thou wrot'st thy comedies, did'st not commit.”

In whom with Nature Study claimed a part,  
Yet who unto himself owed all his art ;  
Here lies Ben Jonson : every age will look  
With sorrow here, with wonder on his book.

Elsewhere he thus expresses his preference for Jonson, as a dramatist, over the greatest of his contemporaries :—

Shakspeare may make griefs, merry Beaumont's style  
Ravish and melt anger into a smile ;  
In winter nights or after meals they be,  
I must confess, very good company ;  
But thou exact'st our best hours' industry ;  
We may read them, we ought to study thee ;  
Thy scenes are precepts ; every verse doth give  
Counsel, and teach us, not to laugh, but live.

In a third elegy he rises to a more rapturous strain :—

What thou wert, like the hard oracles of old,  
Without an ecstasy cannot be told :  
We must be ravished first ; thou must infuse  
Thyself into us, both the theme and muse ;  
Else, though we all conspired to make thy hearse  
Our works, so that it had been but one great verse ;  
Though the priest had translated for that time  
The Liturgy, and buried thee in rhyme ;  
So that in metre we had heard it said,  
Poetic dust is to poetic laid ;  
And though, that dust being Shakspeare's, thou might'st  
have,  
Not his room, but the poet for thy grave ;  
So that, as thou didst prince of numbers die,  
And live, so thou mightest in numbers lie ;  
'Twere frail solemnity :—verses on thee,  
And not like thine, would but kind libels be ;  
And we, not speaking thy whole worth, should raise  
Worse blots than they that envied thy praise.

Of several elegies by this poet upon Charles I. the following is perhaps the most striking :—

Charles !—ah ! forbear, forbear, lest mortals prize  
His name too dearly, and idolatrize.

His name ! our loss !— Thrice cursed and forlorn  
Be that black night which ushered in this morn.

Charles our dread sovereign !—hold ! lest outlawed sense  
Bribe and seduce tame reason to dispense  
With those celestial powers, and distrust  
Heaven can behold such treason and prove just.

Charles our dread sovereign's murdered !—tremble, and  
View what convulsions shoulder-shake this land :  
Court, city, country, nay three kingdoms run  
To their last stage, and set with him, their sun.

Charles our dread sovereign's murdered at his gate !  
Fell fiends ! dire hydras of a stiff-necked state !  
Strange body politic, whose members spread,  
And monster-like swell bigger than their head.

Charles of Great Britain ! He ! who was the known  
King of three realms, lies murdered in his own.  
He ! he ! who Faith's Defender lived and stood,  
Died here to rebaptize it in his blood.

No more ! no more ! Fame's trump shall echo all  
The rest in dreadful thunder. Such a fall  
Great Christendom ne'er patterned ; and 'twas strange  
Earth's centre reeled not at this dismal change.

The blow struck Britain blind ; each well-set limb  
By dislocation was lopt off in him ;  
And, though she yet lives, she lives but to condole  
Three bleeding bodies left without a soul.

Religion puts on black ; sad Loyalty  
Blushes and mourns to see bright Majesty  
Butchered by such assassines ; nay both  
'Gainst God, 'gainst Law, Allegiance, and their Oath.

Farewell, sad Isle ! farewell ! Thy fatal glory  
Is summed, cast up, and cancelled in this story.

Cleveland, however, after all, is perhaps most in his  
element when his chief inspiration is scorn, and *facit*

<sup>1</sup> Commonly printed :—

“ Who lived and Faith's defender stood.”

*indignatis versum.* The most elaborate of his satires or invectives is that which he calls *The Rebel Scot*. It is rather too long to be given entire; and in truth a good deal of it is more furious than forcible; but we will transcribe the commencing portion, which contains the most effective passages:—

How! Providence! and yet a Scottish crew!  
Then Madame Nature wears black patches too.  
What! shall our nation be in bondage thus  
Unto a land that truckles under us?  
Ring the bells backward: I am all on fire;  
Not all the buckets in a country quire  
Shall quench my rage. A poet should be feared  
When angry, like a comet's flaming beard.  
And where's the Stoic can his wrath appease  
To see his country sick of Pym's disease;—  
By Scotch invasion to be made a prey  
To such pig-widgeon myrmidons as they?  
But that there's charm in verse, I would not quote  
The name of Scot without an antidote;  
Unless my head were red, that I might brew  
Invention there that might be poison too.  
Were I a drowsy judge, whose dismal note  
Disgorgeth halters, as a juggler's throat  
Doth ribands; could I in Sir Empiric's tone  
Speak pills in phrase, and quack destruction,  
Or roar like Marshall, that Geneva bull,  
Hell and damnation a pulpit-full;  
Yet, to express a Scot, to play that prize,  
Not all those mouth-granados can suffice.  
Before a Scot can properly be cursed,  
I must, like Hocus, swallow daggers first.

Come, keen Iambics, with your badger's feet,  
And, badger-like, bite till your teeth do meet.  
Help, ye tart satirists, to imp my rage  
With all the scorpions that should whip this age.  
Scots are like witches; do but whet your pen,  
Scratch till the blood come, they'll not hurt you then.  
Now, as the Martyrs were enforced to take  
The shapes of beasts, like hypocrites at stake,

I 'll bait my Scot so, yet not cheat your eyes ;—  
 A Scot, within a beast, is no disguise.  
 No more let Ireland brag her harmless nation  
 Harbours no venom, since that Scots plantation.  
 Nor can our feigned antiquity obtain :  
 Since they came in, England hath wolves again.  
 The Scot that kept the Tower might have shown,  
 Within the grate of his own breast alone,  
 The leopard and the panther, and engrossed  
 What all those wild collegiates had cost  
 The honest high-shoes, in their termly fees  
 First to the salvage-lawyer, next to these.  
 Nature herself doth Scotchmen beasts confess,  
 Making their country such a wilderness ;  
 A land that brings in question and suspense  
 God's omnipresence, but that Charles came thence—  
 But that Montrose and Crawford's royal band  
 Atoned their sin, and christened half their land :  
 Nor is it all the nation hath these spots :—  
 There is a Church as well as Kirk of Scots ;  
 As in a picture where the squinting paint  
 Shows fiend on this side, and on that side saint.  
 He that saw Hell in his melancholy dream,  
 And, in the twilight of his fancy's theme,  
 Scared from his sins, repented in a fright,  
 Had he viewed Scotland had turned proselyte.  
 A land where one may pray with cursed intent,  
 O may they never suffer banishment !  
 Had Cain been Scot, God would have changed his  
 doom,—  
 Not forced him wander, but confined him home.  
 Like Jews they spread, and as infection fly,  
 As if the Devil had ubiquity.  
 Hence 'tis they live as rovers, and defy  
 This or that place, rags of geography :  
 They 're citizens o' the world, they 're all in all ;  
 Scotland 's a nation epidemical.

The poem is accompanied by a Latin version on the opposite page, which however is not by Cleveland, but by Thomas Gawen, a Fellow of New College, Oxford.

This may be fitly followed up by the verses headed  
'The Definition of a Protector':

What 's a Protector ? He 's a stately thing  
That apes it in the non-age of a king :  
A tragic actor, Cæsar in a clown ;  
He 's a brass farthing stamped with a crown :  
A bladder blown, with other breaths puffed full ;  
Not the Perillus, but Perillus bull :  
Æsop's proud Ass veiled in the Lion's skin ;  
An outward saint lined with a Devil within :  
An echo whence the royal sound doth come,  
But just as a barrel-head sounds like a drum :  
Fantastic image of the royal head,  
The brewer's with the king's arms quartered :  
He is a counterfeited piece, that shows  
Charles his effigies with a copper nose :  
In fine, he 's one we must Protector call ;—  
From whom the King of Kings protect us all.

And we fear the still more bitter bile of the following effusion 'On O. P. Sick,' with which we shall conclude our extracts, must be understood to be directed against the same illustrious quarter :—

Yield, periwigged impostor, yield to fate,  
Religious whiffler, mountebank of state,<sup>s</sup>  
Down to the lowest abyss, the blackest shade  
That night does own ; that so the earth thou 'st made  
Loathsome by thousand barbarisms may be  
Delivered from heaven's vengeance, and from thee.  
The reeking steam of thy fresh villanies  
Would spot the stars, and menstruate the skies ;  
Force them to break the league they 've made with men,  
And with a flood rinse the foul world again.  
Thy bays are tarnished with thy cruelties,  
Rebellions, sacrilege, and perjuries.  
Descend, descend, thou veiled Devil ! Fall,  
Thou subtle bloodsucker, thou cannibal !

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<sup>s</sup> Misprinted "fate" in the edition before us.

Thy arts are catching ; cozen Satan too ;  
Thou hast a trick more than he ever knew ;  
He ne'er was atheist yet : persuade him to 't ;  
The schismatics will back thee, horse and foot.

We may notice that in one of his prose pieces 'The Character of a London Diurnal,' Cleveland introduces other personal peculiarities of Cromwell besides his fiery nasal organ. "This Cromwell," he observes, "is never so valorous as when he is making speeches for the Association ; which, nevertheless, he doth, somewhat ominously, with his neck awry, holding up his ear as if he expected Mahomet's pigeon to come and prompt him. He should be a bird of prey, too, by his bloody beak ;" &c. It is probable enough that this attitude of one threading a needle, or trying to look round a corner, may have been customary with Cromwell in speaking at the early date to which the description refers, as it appears to have been with his sect in general : in another poem Cleveland depicts the Puritan preacher as

With face and fashion to be known  
For one of sure election ;  
With eyes all white, and many a groan ;  
With neck aside, to draw in tone ;  
With harp in 's nose, &c.

These last mentioned writers—Carew, Lovelace, Suckling, Denham, and Cleveland—were all, as we have seen, cavaliers ; but the cause of puritanism and the parliament had also its poets as well as that of love and loyalty. Of these the two most eminent were Marvel and Wither. Marvel's era, however, is rather after the Restoration. George Wither, who was born in 1588,

covers nearly eighty years of the seventeenth century with his life, and not very far from sixty with his works : his first publication, his volume of satires entitled 'Abuses Stript and Whipt,' having appeared in 1611, and some of his last pieces only a short time before his death in 1667. The entire number of his separate works, as they have been reckoned up by modern bibliographers, exceeds a hundred. Two songs or short poems of Wither's inserted by Percy in his *Reliques*\*—the one beginning

Shall I, wasting in despair,  
 Die because a woman's fair ?  
 Or make pale my cheeks with care  
 Cause another's rosy are ?  
 Be she fairer than the day,  
 Or the flowery meads in May ;  
 If she be not so to me,  
 What care I how fair she be ?

—the other, entitled 'The Stedfast Shepherd,' an exquisitely graceful as well as high-thoughted carol, first recalled attention to this forgotten writer ; his high merits were a few years afterwards more fully illustrated by Mr. Octavius Gilchrist in the Gentleman's Magazine ; and he was subsequently made more widely known by the specimens of him given by Ellis,—among the rest the passage of consummate beauty (previously quoted by Gilchrist) from his *Shepherd's Hunting*, published in 1615, while he was confined in the Marshalsea, in which, breaking out into what we may call a hymn or pæan of gratitude and affection, he recounts all that Poetry and his Muse still were and had ever been to him :—

In my former days of bliss  
 Her divine skill taught me this,—

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\* Vol. iii. pp. 190 and 264.

That from every thing I saw  
I could some invention draw,  
And raise pleasure to her height  
Through the meaneest object's sight.  
By the murmur of a spring,  
Or the least bough's rusteling ;  
By a daisy, whose leaves spread  
Shut when Titan goes to bed ;  
Or a shady bush or tree,  
She could more infuse in me  
Than all Nature's beauties can  
In some other wiser man.  
By her help I also now  
Make this churlish place allow  
Some things that may sweeten gladness  
In the very gall of sadness.  
The dull loneliness, the black shade,  
That these hanging vaults have made ;  
The strange music of the waves  
Beating on these hollow caves ;  
This black den, which rocks emboss,  
Overgrown with eldest moss ;  
The rude portals, that give sight  
More to terror than delight ;  
This my chamber of neglect,  
Walled about with disrespect ;  
From all these, and this dull air,  
A fit object for despair,  
She hath taught me by her might  
To draw comfort and delight.  
Therefore, thou best earthly bliss,  
I will cherish thee for this,—  
Poesy !—thou sweet'st content  
That e'er heaven to mortals lent.  
Though they as a trifle leave thee  
Whose dull thoughts cannot conceive thee ;  
Though thou be to them a scorn  
That to nought but earth are born ;  
Let my life no longer be  
Than I am in love with thee.  
Though our wise ones call thee madness,  
Let me never taste of gladness

If I love not thy maddest fits  
 More than all their greatest wits.  
 And, though some, too seeming holy,  
 Do account thy raptures folly,  
 Thou dost teach me to contemn  
 What makes knaves and fools of them.

One excellence for which all Wither's writings are eminent, his prose as well as his verse, is their genuine English. His unaffected diction, even now, has scarcely a stain of age upon it,—but flows on, ever fresh and transparent, like a pebbled rill. As a specimen of his clear and easy narrative style, we will transcribe a few passages from the Introduction to his 'Abuses Stript and Whipt,' in which, by way of explaining the occasion of the work, he relates the history of his life to that date. After telling us that he had been well grounded at school in the Latin and Greek grammar, he proceeds to give an account of his first experience of Oxford:—

It is the spring of knowledge, that imparts  
 A thousand several sciences and arts;  
 A pure clear fount, whose water is by odds  
 Far sweeter than the nectar of the gods;  
 Or, for to give 't a title that befits,  
 It is the very nursery of wits.  
 There once arrived, 'cause my wits were raw,  
 I fell to wondering at each thing I saw;  
 And for my learning made a month's vacation  
 In noting of the place's situation;  
 The palaces and temples that were due  
 Unto the wise Minerva's hallowed crew;  
 Their cloisters, walks, and groves. . . . .  
 But, having this experience, and withal  
 Gotten some practice at the tennis ball,  
 My tutor, telling me I was not sent  
 To have my time there vain and idly spent,

From childish humours gently called me in,  
And with his grave instructions did begin  
To teach ; and by his good persuasions sought  
To bring me to a love of what he taught.  
Then, after that, he laboured to impart  
The hidden secrets of the Logic art ;  
Instead of Grammar rules, he read me then  
Old Scotus, Seton, and new Keckerman.  
He showed me which the Predicables be,  
As Genus, Species, and the other three.  
So having said enough of their contents,  
Handles in order the ten Predicaments ;  
Next Postprædicamenta, with Priorum  
Perhermenias et Posteriorum.  
He with the Topics opens, and descries  
Elenchi, full of subtle fallacies :  
These to unfold indeed he took much pain,  
But to my dull capacity in vain ;  
For all he spake was to as little pass  
As in old time unto the vulgar was  
The Romish rite, which, whether bad or good,  
The poor unlearned never understood ;  
But of the meaning were as far to seek  
As Coriat's horse was of his master's Greek,  
When in that tongue he made a speech at length,  
To show the beast the greatness of his strength.  
For I his meaning did no more conjecture  
Than if he had been reading Hebrew lecture.  
His Infinities, Individualities,  
Contraries, and Subcontraries,  
Divisions, Subdivisions, and a crew  
Of terms and words such as I never knew,  
My shallow understanding so confounded,  
That I was gravelled like a ship that 's grounded ;  
And, in despair the mystery to gain,  
Neglecting all, took neither heed nor pain.  
Yea, I remained in that amazing plight  
Till Cynthia six times lost her borrowed light.  
But then, ashamed to find myself still mute,  
And other little dandiprats dispute,  
That could distinguish upon Rationale,  
Yet scarcely heard of Verbum Personale ;

Or could by heart, like parrots, in the schools  
Stand prattling, these methought were pretty fools ;  
And therefore, in some hope to profit so,  
That I like them at least might make a show,  
I reached my books that I had cast about,  
To see if I could pick his meaning out ;  
And, prying on them with some diligence  
At length I felt my dull intelligence  
Begin to open, and perceived more  
In half an hour than half a year before.  
And, which is strange, the things I had forgot,  
And till that very day remembered not  
Since first my tutor read them, those did then  
Return into my memory again :  
So that with which I had so much to do  
A week made easy, yea, and pleasing too.

Afterwards he betook himself to court :—

But there I viewed another world, methought,  
And little hope, or none, of that I sought.  
I saw I must, if there I ought would do,  
First learn new fashions, and new language too.  
If I should have been hung, I knew not how  
To teach my body how to cringe and bow ;  
Or to embrace a fellow's hinder quarters,  
As if I meant to steal away his garters.  
When any stooped to me with congees trim,  
All I could do was stand and laugh at him.  
Bless me, thought I, what will this coxcomb do ?  
When I perceived one reaching at my shoe.  
But, when I heard him speak, why I was fully  
Possessed we learned but barbarism in Tully.  
There was not any street but had a wench  
That at once coming could have learned them French.  
Grecians had little there to do, poor souls,  
Unless to talk with beggar-men in Paul's.  
All our school Latin would not serve to draw  
An instrument adjudged good in law.  
Nay, which is more, they would have taught me fain  
To go new-learn my English tongue again ;  
As if there had been reason to suspect  
Our ancient-used Hampshire dialect.

Though still disappointed in his hopes of preferment, he continues to believe that there is a happy time to come—"Which," he says in conclusion,

— when I have most need of comfort, shall  
 Send me true joy to make amends for all.  
 But say it be not; whilst I draw this air,  
 I have a heart, I hope, shall ne'er despair;  
 Because there is a God, with whom I trust  
 My soul shall triumph when my body's dust.  
 Yet, when I found that my endeavours still  
 Fell out as they would have 't that wished me ill;  
 And when I saw the world was grown so coy  
 To curb me as too young them to employ,  
 And that her greatness thought she did not want me,  
 Or found no calling bad enough to grant me;  
 (And having scaped some envies, which to touch  
 Unto this purpose appertains not much);  
 Weighing both bad,<sup>b</sup> and therewith also this,  
 How great a shame and what reproach it is  
 To be still idle; and because I spied  
 How glad they would be that my fate envied  
 To find me so; although the world doth scorn  
 To allow me action, as if I were born  
 Before my time; yet e'en to let her see  
 In spite of Fortune I 'd employed be,  
 Casting preferment's too much care aside,  
 And leaving that to God, that can provide,  
 The actions of the present time I eyed,  
 And all her secret villanies descried.  
 I stripped Abuse from all her colours quite,  
 And laid her ugly face to open sight.  
 I laboured to observe her ways, and then  
 In general the state and tricks of men.  
 Wherein although my labour were not seen,  
 Yet, trust me, the discovery hath been  
 My great content; and I have for my pain,  
 Although no outward, yet an inward gain.  
 In which because I can with all my heart  
 Allow my countrymen to share a part,

• <sup>b</sup> There seems to be a misprint here.

And cause I think it may do some a pleasure,  
On opportunity I 'll now take seizure,  
And summon up my Muse to make relation :—  
I may be employed ere long ;—now 's my vacation.

In all this, too, we may read the character of the man—enthusiastic and sincerely anxious to reform the world, but at once suspicious and vain to an inordinate degree, and ever ready, consequently, to take anything for granted in his own favour or against another, to change his views and his course suddenly and violently, and still, however decidedly or frequently he might have turned his back upon his former self, to continue to believe that he was in the right and every one else in the wrong. Down to the breaking out of the war between the king and the parliament, Wither, although his pious poetry made him a favourite with the puritans, had always professed himself a strong church and state man ; even at so late a date as in 1639, when he was above fifty, he served as a captain of horse in the expedition against the Scotch Covenanters ; and when two or three years after he took arms on the other side, he had yet his new principles in a great measure to seek or make. It appears not to have been till a considerable time after this that his old admiration of the monarchy and the hierarchy became suddenly converted into the conviction that both one and other were, and had been all along, only public nuisances—the fountains of all the misrule and misery of the nation. What mainly instigated him to throw himself into the commencing contest with such eagerness seems to have been simply the notion which possessed and tormented him all his life, that he was born with a peculiar genius for public affairs, and that things had

very little chance of going right unless he were employed. With his head full of this conceit, it mattered comparatively little on which side he took his stand to begin with : he would speedily make all even and right ; the one thing needful in the first instance was, that his services should be taken advantage of. Of course, Wither's opinions, like those of other men, were influenced by his position, and he was no doubt perfectly sincere in the most extreme of the new principles which he was ultimately led to profess. The defect of men of his temper is not insincerity. But they are nevertheless apt to be almost as unstable as if they had no strong convictions at all. Their convictions, in truth, however strong, do not rest so much upon reason or principle, as upon mere passion. They see everything through so thick and deeply coloured an atmosphere of self, that its real shape goes for very little in their conception of it ; change only the hue of the haze, or the halo, with which it is thus invested, and you altogether change to them the thing itself—making the white appear black, the bright dim, the round square, or the reverse. Wither, with all his ardour and real honesty, appears never in fact to have acquired any credit for reliability, or steadiness in the opinions he held, either from friends or opponents. He very naively lets out this himself in a prose pamphlet which he published in 1624, entitled 'The Scholar's Purgatory,' being a vindication of himself addressed to the Bishops, in which, after stating that he had been offered more money and better entertainment if he would have employed himself in setting forth heretical fancies than he had any chance of ever obtaining by the profession of the truth, he adds, " Yea, sometimes I have been

wooed to the profession of their wild and ill-grounded opinions by the sectaries of so many several separations; that, had I liked, or rather had not God been the more merciful to me, I might have been Lieutenant, if not Captain, of some new band of such volunteers long ere this time." Overtures of this kind are of course only made to persons who are believed to be open to them. It is plain from his own account that Wither was thus early notorious as a speculator or trader in such securities — as one ready, not precisely to sell himself, his opinions, and his conscience, to the highest bidder, but *yet* to be gained over if the offer were only made large enough to convert as well as purchase him. There is a great deal of very passable wearing and working honesty of this kind in the world.

The history of Wither's numerous publications has been elaborately investigated by the late Mr. Park in the first and second volumes of the 'British Bibliographer'; many of his poems have been recently reprinted by Sir Egerton Brydges, and others of his admirers; and an ample account of his life and writings, drawn up with a large and intimate knowledge, as well as affectionate zeal and painstaking, which make it supersede whatever had been previously written on the subject, forms the principal article (extending over more than 130 pages) of Mr. Wilmott's 'Lives of Sacred Poets' (8vo. Lon. 1834). Much injustice, however, has been done to Wither by the hasty judgment that has commonly been passed, even by his greatest admirers, upon his later political poetry, as if it consisted of mere party invective and fury, and all that he had written of any enduring value or interest was to be found in the pro-

ductions of the early part of his life. Some at least of his political pieces are very remarkable for their vigour and terseness. As a specimen we will give a portion of a poem which he published without his name in 1647, under the title of 'Amygdala Britannica; Almonds for Parrots; A Dish of Stone-fruit, partly shelled and partly unshelled; which, if cracked, picked, and well digested, may be wholesome against those epidemic distempers of the brain now predominant, and prevent some malignant diseases likely to ensue: composed heretofore by a well-known modern author, and now published according to a copy found written with his own hand. *Qui bene latuit bene vixit.*' This fantastic title-page (with the manufacture of which the bookseller may have had more to do than Wither himself) was suited to the popular taste of the day, but would little lead a modern reader to expect the nervous concentration and passionate earnestness of such verses as the following :—

The time draws near, and hasteth on,  
 In which strange works shall be begun ;  
 And prosecutions, whereon shall  
 Depend much future bliss or bale.  
 If to the left hand you decline,  
 Assured destruction they divine ;  
 But, if the right-hand course ye take,  
 This island it will happy make.

A time draws nigh in which you may  
 As you shall please the chess-men play ;  
 Remove, confine, check, leave, or take,  
 Dispose, depose, undo, or make,  
 Pawn, rook, knight, bishop, queen, or king,  
 And act your wills in every thing :  
 But, if that time let slip you shall,  
 For yesterday in vain you call.

A time draws nigh in which the sun  
 Will give more light than he hath done :  
 Then also you shall see the moon  
 Shine brighter than the sun at noon ;  
 And many stars now seeming dull  
 Give shadows like the moon at full.  
 Yet then shall some, who think they see,  
 Wrapt in Egyptian darkness be.

A time draws nigh when with your blood  
 You shall preserve the viper's brood,  
 And starve your own ; yet fancy than<sup>a</sup>  
 That you have played the pelican ;  
 But, when you think the frozen snakes  
 Have changed their natures for your sakes,  
 They, in requital, will contrive  
 Your mischief who did them revive.

A time will come when they that wake  
 Shall dream ; and sleepers undertake  
 The grand affairs : yet,<sup>b</sup> few men know  
 Which are the dreamers of these two ;  
 And fewer care by which of these  
 They guided be, so they have ease :  
 But an alarm shall advance  
 Your drowsy spirits from that trance.

A time shall come ere long in which  
 Mere beggars shall grow soonest rich ;  
 The rich with wants be pinched more  
 Than such as go from door to door ;  
 The honourable by the base  
 Shall be despited to their face ;  
 The truth defamed be with lies ;  
 The fool preferred before the wise ;  
 And he that fighteth to be free,  
 By conquering enslaved shall be.

A time will come when see you shall  
 Toads fly aloft and eagles crawl ;

\* Then.

<sup>b</sup> As yet.

Wolves walk abroad in human shapes ;  
Men turn to asses, hogs, and apes :  
But, when that cursed time is come,  
Well 's he that is both deaf and dumb ;  
That nothing speaketh, nothing hears,  
And neither hopes, desires, nor fears.

When men shall generally confess  
Their folly and their wickedness ;  
Yet act as if there neither were  
Among them conscience, wit, or fear ;  
When they shall talk as if they had  
Some brains, yet do as they were mad ;  
And nor by reason, nor by noise,  
By human or by heavenly voice,  
By being praised or reproved,  
By judgments or by mercies, moved :  
Then look for so much sword and fire  
As such a temper doth require.

Ere God his wrath on Balaam wreaks,  
First by his ass to him he speaks ;  
Then shows him in an angel's hand  
A sword, his courses to withstand ;  
But, seeing still he forward went,  
Quite through his heart a sword he sent.  
And God will thus, if thus they do,  
Still deal with kings, and subjects too ;  
That, where his grace despised is grown,  
He by his judgments may be known.

Neither Churchill nor Cowper ever wrote anything in the same style better than this. The modern air, too, of the whole, with the exception of a few words, is wonderful. But this, as we have said, is the character of all Wither's poetry—of his earliest as well as of his latest. It is nowhere more conspicuous than in his early religious verses, especially in his collection entitled 'Songs and Hymns of the Church,' first published in 1624. There is no-

thing of the kind in the language more perfectly beautiful than some of these. We subjoin two of them:—

*Thanksgiving for Seasonable Weather. Song 85.*

Lord, should the sun, the clouds, the wind,  
 The air, and seasons be  
 To us so froward and unkind  
 As we are false to thee;  
 All fruits would quite away be burned,  
 Or lie in water drowned,  
 Or blasted be or overturned,  
 Or chilled on the ground.

But from our duty though we swerve,  
 Thou still dost mercy show,  
 And deign thy creatures to preserve,  
 That men might thankful grow:  
 Yea, though from day to day we sin,  
 And thy displeasure gain,  
 No sooner we to cry begin  
 But pity we obtain.

The weather now thou changed hast  
 That put us late to fear,  
 And when our hopes were almost past  
 Then comfort did appear.  
 The heaven the earth's complaints hath heard;  
 They reconciled be;  
 And thou such weather hast prepared  
 As we desired of thee.

For which, with lifted hands and eyes,  
 To thee we do repay  
 The due and willing sacrifice  
 Of giving thanks to-day;  
 Because such offerings we should not  
 To render thee be slow,  
 Nor let that mercy be forgot  
 Which thou art pleased to show.

*Thanksgiving for Victory. Song 88.*

We love thee, Lord, we praise thy name,  
 Who, by thy great almighty arm,

Hast kept us from the spoil and shame  
 Of those that sought our causeless harm :  
 Thou art our life, our triumph-song,  
 The joy and comfort of our heart ;  
 To thee all praises do belong,  
 And thou the God of Armies art.

We must confess it is thy power  
 That made us masters of the field ;  
 Thou art our bulwark and our tower,  
 Our rock of refuge and our shield :  
 Thou taught'st our hands and arms to fight ;  
 With vigour thou didst gird us round ;  
 Thou mad'st our foes to take their flight,  
 And thou didst beat them to the ground.

With fury came our armed foes,  
 To blood and slaughter fiercely bent ;  
 And perils round did us inclose,  
 By whatsoever way we went ;  
 That, hadst not thou our Captain been,  
 To lead us on, and off again,  
 We on the place had dead been seen,  
 Or masked in blood and wounds had lain.

This song we therefore sing to thee,  
 And pray that thou for evermore  
 Would'st our Protector deign to be,  
 As at this time and heretofore ;  
 That thy continual favour shown  
 May cause us more to thee incline,  
 And make it through the world be known  
 That such as are our foes are thine.

## BROWNE.

Along with Wither ought to be mentioned a contemporary poet of a genius, or at least of a manner, in some respects kindred to his, and whose fate it has been to experience the same long neglect, William Browne, the author of 'Britannia's Pastorals,' of which the first part was published in 1613, the second in 1616, and of

‘The Shepherd’s Pipe in Seven Eclogues,’ which appeared in 1614. Browne was a native of Tavistock in Devonshire, where he was born in 1590, and he is supposed to have died in 1645. It is remarkable that, if he lived to so late a date, he should not have written more than he appears to have done: the two parts of his *Britannia’s Pastorals* were reprinted together in 1625; and a piece called ‘The Inner Temple Masque,’ and a few short poems, were published for the first time in an edition of his works brought out, under the care of Dr. Farmer, in 1772; but the last thirty years of his life would seem, in so far as regards original production, to have been a blank. Yet a remarkable characteristic of his style, as well as of Wither’s, is its ease and fluency; and it would appear, from what he says in one of the songs of his *Pastorals*, that he had written part of that work before he was twenty. His poetry certainly does not read as if its fountain would be apt soon to run dry. His facility of rhyming and command of harmonious expression are very great; and, within their proper sphere, his invention and fancy are also extremely active and fertile. His strength, however, lies chiefly in description, not the thing for which poetry or language is best fitted, and a species of writing which cannot be carried on long without becoming tiresome; he is also an elegant didactic disclaimer; but of passion, or indeed of any breath of actual living humanity, his poetry has almost none. This, no doubt, was the cause of the neglect into which after a short time it was allowed to drop; and this limited quality of his genius may also very probably have been the reason why he so soon ceased to write and publish. From the time when

religious and political contention began to wax high, in the latter years of King James, such poetry as Browne's had little chance of acceptance; from about that date Wither, as we have seen, who also had previously written his 'Shepherd's Hunting,' and other similar pieces, took up a new strain; and Browne, if he was to continue to be listened to, must have done the same, which he either would not or could not. Yet, although without the versatility of Wither, and also with less vitality than Wither even in the kind of poetry which is common to the two, Browne rivals that writer both in the abundance of his poetic vein and the sweetness of his verse; and the English of the one has nearly all the purity, perspicuity, and what we may call unfading youngness of style which is so remarkable in the other. Here is a specimen from the reply of Remond to the love-tale of his brother shepherd, in the first Song of the first Book of Britannia's Pastorals:—

— Have thy stars malign been such,  
 That their predominations sway so much  
 Over the rest, that with a mild aspect  
 The lives and loves of shepherds do affect?  
 Then do I think there is some greater hand  
 Which thy endeavours still doth counterman.  
 Wherefore I wish thee quench the flame thus moved,  
 And never love except thou be beloved;  
 For such an humour every woman seizeth,  
 She loves not him that plaineth, but that pleaseth.  
 When much thou lovest, most disdain comes on thee;  
 And, when thou think'st to hold her, she flies from thee.  
 She, followed, flies; she, fled from, follows post,  
 And loveth best where she is hated most.  
 'Tis ever noted, both in maids and wives,  
 Their hearts and tongues are never relatives;—  
 Hearts full of holes (so elder shepherds sayn),  
 As apter to receive than to retain.

Whose crafts and wiles did I intend to show,  
 This day would not permit me time, I know :  
 The day's swift hours would their course have run,  
 And dived themselves within the ocean,  
 Ere I should have performed half my task,  
 Striving their crafty subtleties to unmask.  
 And, gentle swain, some counsel take of me :  
 Love not still where thou may'st ; love who loves thee ;  
 Draw to the courteous ; fly thy love's abhorrer ;  
 And, if she be not for thee, be not for her.  
 If that she still be wavering, will away,  
 Why should'st thou strive to hold what will not stay ?  
 This maxim reason never can confute :—  
 Better to live by loss than die by suit.

Favour and pity wait on patience ;  
 And hatred oft attendeth violence.  
 If thou wilt get desire whence love hath pawned it,  
 Believe me, take thy time, but ne'er demand it.  
 Women, as well as men, retain desire,  
 But can dissemble more than men their fire.  
 Be never caught with looks, nor self-wrought rumour,  
 Nor by a quaint disguise, nor singing humour.  
 Those outside shows are toys which outwards snare ;  
 But virtue, lodged within, is only fair.  
 If thou hast seen the beauty of our nation,  
 And find'st her have no love, have thou no passion ;  
 But seek thou further : other places, sure,  
 May yield a face as fair, a love more pure.  
 Leave, oh then leave, fond swain, this idle course ;  
 For love's a good no mortal wight can force.

And here is another short extract from the second Song, exemplifying Browne's more habitual manner, on ground where all the descriptive poets have been competitors :—

Not all the ointments brought from Delos isle,  
 Nor from the confines of seven-headed Nile ;  
 Nor that brought whence Phenicians have abodes ;  
 Nor Cyprus' wild vine flower ; nor that of Rhôdes ;  
 Nor rose's oil from Naples, Capua ;  
 Saffron confected in Cilicia ;

Nor that of quinces, nor of marjoram,  
 That ever from the isle of Coös came :  
 Nor these, nor any else, though ne'er so rare,  
 Could with this place for sweetest smells compare.  
 There stood the elm, whose shade, so mildly dim,  
 Doth nourish all that growtheth under him :  
 Cypress, that like pyramids run topping,  
 And hurt the least of any by their dropping :  
 The alder, whose fat shadow nourisheth ;—  
 Each plant set near to him long flourisheth :  
 The heavy-headed plane-tree, by whose shade  
 The grass grows thickest, men are fresher made :  
 The oak that best endures the thunder-strokes :  
 The everlasting ebony, cedar, box :  
 The olive, that in wainscot never cleaves :  
 The amorous vine, which in the elm still weaves :  
 The lotus, juniper, where worms ne'er enter :  
 The pine, with whom men through the ocean venture :  
 The warlike yew, by which, more than the lance,  
 The strong-armed English spirits conquered France.  
 Amongst the rest the tamarisk there stood,  
 For housewives' besoms only known most good :  
 The cold-place-loving birch and service tree ;  
 The walnut loving vales, and mulberry ;  
 The maple, ash, that do delight in fountains  
 Which have their currents by the sides of mountains ;  
 The laurel, myrtle, ivy, date, which hold  
 Their leaves all winter, be it ne'er so cold ;  
 The fir, that often-times doth rosin drop ;  
 The beech, that scales the welkin with his top.  
 All these, and thousand more, within this grove,  
 By all the industry of nature, strove  
 To frame an arbour that might keep within it  
 The best of beauties that the world hath in it.

## PROSE WRITERS :—CHARLES I.

Most of the prose that was written and published in England in the middle portion of the seventeenth century, or the twenty years preceding the Restoration, was political and theological, but very little of it has any

claim to be considered as belonging to the national literature. A torrent of pamphlets and ephemeral polemics supplied the ravenous public appetite with a mental sustenance which answered the wants of the moment, much as the bakers' ovens did with daily bread for the body. It was all devoured, and meant to be devoured, as fast as it was produced—devoured in the sense of being quite used up and consumed, so far as any good was to be got out of it. It was in no respect intended for posterity, any more than the linen and broad-cloth then manufactured were intended for posterity. Still even this busy and excited time produced some literary performances which still retain more or less of interest.

The writings attributed to Charles I. were first collected and published at the Hague soon after his death, in a folio volume without date, under the title of 'Reliquiae Sacrae Carolinæ,' and twice afterwards in England, namely, in 1660 and 1687, with the title of 'ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΑ : The Works of King Charles the Martyr.' If we except a number of speeches to the parliament, letters, dispatches, and other political papers, the contents of this collection are all theological, consisting of prayers, arguments, and disquisitions on the controversy about church government, and the famous 'Eikon Basiliké, or, The Portraiture of his sacred Majesty in his Solitude and Sufferings ;' which, having been printed under the care of Dr. Gauden (after the Restoration successively Bishop of Exeter and Worcester), had been first published by itself immediately after the king's execution. It is now generally admitted that the Eikon was really written by Gauden, who, after the Restoration, openly claimed it as his own. Mr. Hallam, however, although he has no

doubt of Gauden being the author, admits that it is, nevertheless, superior to his acknowledged writings. "A strain of majestic melancholy," he observes, "is well kept up; but the personated sovereign is rather too theatrical for real nature; the language is too rhetorical and amplified, the periods too artificially elaborated. None but scholars and practised writers employ such a style as this."\* It is not improbable that the work may have been submitted to Charles's revisal, and that it may have received both his approval and his corrections. Charles, indeed, was more in the habit of correcting what had been written by others than of writing anything himself. "Though he was of as slow a pen as of speech," says Sir Philip Warwick, "yet both were very significant; and he had that modest esteem of his own parts, that he would usually say, he would willingly make his own dispatches, but that he found it better to be a cobbler than a shoemaker. I have been in company with very learned men, when I have brought them their own papers back from him with his alterations, who ever confessed his amendments to have been very material. And I once, by his commandment, brought him a paper of my own to read, to see whether it was suitable to his directions, and he disallowed it slightly: I desired him I might call Dr. Sanderson to aid me, and that the doctor might understand his own meaning from himself; and, with his majesty's leave, I brought him whilst he was walking and taking the air; whereupon we two went back; but pleased him as little when we returned it: for, smilingly, he said, a man might have as good ware out of a chandler's shop; but afterwards he set it down with his own pen very plainly, and suitably to his own inten-

\* Lit. of Eur. iii. 662.

tions." The most important of the literary productions which are admitted to be wholly Charles's own, are his papers in the controversy which he carried on at Newcastle in June and July, 1646, with Alexander Henderson, the Scotch clergyman, on the question between episcopacy and presbytery, and those on the same subject in his controversy with the parliamentary divines at Newport, in October, 1648. These papers show considerable clearness of thinking and logical or argumentative talent ; but it cannot be said that they are written with any remarkable force or elegance. It is not easy to understand the meaning of Horace Walpole's judgment on Charles's style, that "it was formed between a certain portion of sense, adversity, dignity, and perhaps a little insincerity."\* What he says of a copy of verses said to have been written by his majesty during his confinement in Carisbrook Castle, is more to the purpose : "The poetry is most uncouth and inharmonious ; but there are strong thoughts in it, some good sense, and a strain of majestic piety." Though not very polished, indeed, or very like the production of a practised versifier, which goes so far to furnish a presumption of its authenticity, this composition, which is entitled 'Majesty in Misery, or an Imploration to the King of Kings,' indicates poetic feeling, and an evident familiarity with the highest models. Here are a few of its more striking verses :

Nature and law, by thy divine decree  
The only sort of righteous royalty,  
With this dim diadem invested me.

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\* Royal and Noble Authors.

The fiercest furies, that do daily tread  
Upon my grief, my gray discrowned head,  
Are those that owe my bounty for their bread.

The Church of England doth all faction foster,  
The pulpit is usurped by each impostor ;  
*Extempore* excludes the *Pater Noster*.

The Presbyter and Independent seed  
Springs with broad blades ; to make religion bleed  
Herod and Pontius Pilate are agreed.

The corner-stone 's misplaced by every paviour ;  
With such a bloody method and behaviour  
Their ancestors did crucify our Saviour.

With my own power my majesty they wound ;  
In the king's name the king himself's uncrowned ;  
So doth the dust destroy the diamond.

## MILTON'S PROSE WORKS.

We have already mentioned Bishop Hall, both as a poet and as a writer of prose, in the end of the preceding and the earlier part of the present century. A part which Hall took in his old age in the grand controversy of the time brought him into collision with one, with whose name in after ages the world was to resound. John Milton, then in his thirty-third year, and recently returned from his travels in France and Italy, had already, in 1641, lent the aid of his pen to the war of the Puritans against the established church by the publication of his treatise entitled 'Of Reformation,' in Two Books. The same year Hall published his 'Humble Remonstrance' in favour of Episcopacy ; which immediately called forth an 'Answer by Smectymnuus,'—a word formed from the initial letters of the names of five Puritan ministers by whom the tract was written—Stephen Mar-

shall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William (or, as he was on this occasion reduced to designate himself, Uuilliam) Spurstow. The 'Answer' produced a 'Confutation' by Archbishop Usher; and to this Milton replied in a treatise entitled 'Of Prelatical Episcopacy.' Hall then published a 'Defence of the Humble Remonstrance;' and Milton wrote 'Animadversions' upon that. About the same time he also brought out a performance of much greater pretension, under the title of 'The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy,' in Two Books. This is the work containing the magnificent passage in which he makes the announcement of his intention to attempt something in one of the highest kinds of poetry "in the mother-tongue," long afterwards accomplished in his great epic. Meanwhile a 'Confutation of the Animadversions' having been published by Bishop Hall, or his son, Milton replied, in 1642, in an 'Apology for Smectymnuis,' which was the last of his publications in this particular controversy. But nearly all his other prose writings were given to the world within the present period:—namely, his 'Tractate of Education,' addressed to his friend Hartlib, and his noble 'Areopagitica, a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing,' in 1644; his 'Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce,' and his 'Judgment of Martin Bucer concerning Divorce,' the same year; his 'Tetrachordon' and 'Colasterion' (both on the same subject), in 1645; his 'Tenure of Kings and Magistrates,' his 'Eikonoclastes,' in answer to the Eikon Basiliké, and one or two other tracts of more temporary interest, all after the execution of the king, in 1649; his 'Defence for the People of England,' in

answer to Salmasius (in Latin) in 1651 ; his 'Second Defence' (also in Latin), in reply to a work by Peter du Moulin, in 1654 ; two additional Latin tracts in reply to rejoinders of Du Moulin, in 1645 ; his treatises on 'Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Cases,' and on 'The Means of Removing Hirelings out of the Church,' in 1659 ; his 'Letter concerning the Ruptures of the Commonwealth,' and 'Brief Delineation of a Free Commonwealth,' the same year ; and, finally, his 'Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth,' and his 'Brief Notes upon a Sermon preached by Dr. Griffith, called The Fear of God and the King,' in the spring of 1660, immediately before the king's return. Passages of great poetic splendour occur in some of these productions, and a fervid and fiery spirit breathes in all of them, though the animation is as apt to take the tone of mere coarse objurgation and abuse as of lofty and dignified scorn or of vigorous argument ; but, upon the whole, it cannot be said that Milton's English prose is a good style. It is in the first place, not perhaps in vocabulary, but certainly in genius and construction, the most Latinized of English styles ; but it does not merit the commendation bestowed by Pope on another style which he conceived to be formed after the model of the Roman eloquence, of being "so Latin, yet so English all the while." It is both soul and body Latin, only in an English dress. Owing partly to this principle of composition upon which he deliberately proceeded, or to the adoption of which his education and tastes or habits led him, partly to the character of his mind, fervid, gorgeous, and soaring, but having little involuntary impulsiveness or self-abandonment, rich as his style often is, it never

moves with any degree of rapidity or easy grace even in passages where such qualities are most required, but has at all times something of a stiff, cumbrous, oppressive air, as if every thought, the lightest and most evanescent as well as the gravest and stateliest, were attired in brocade and whalebone. There is too little relief from constant straining and striving; too little repose and variety; in short, too little nature. Many things, no doubt, are happily said; there is much strong and also some brilliant expression; but even such imbedded gems do not occur so often as might be looked for from so poetical a mind. In fine, we must admit the truth of what he has himself confessed—that he was not naturally disposed to “this manner of writing;” “wherein,” says he, “knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of nature to another task, I have the use, as I may account it, but of my left hand.”\* With all his quick susceptibility for whatever was beautiful and bright, Milton seems to have needed the soothing influences of the regularity and music of verse fully to bring out his poetry, or to sublimate his imagination to the true poetical state. The passion which is an enlivening flame in his verse half suffocates him with its smoke in his prose.

#### HALES.—CHILLINGWORTH.

Two other eminent names of theological controversialists belonging to this troubled age of the English church may be mentioned together—those of John Hales and William Chillingworth. Hales, who was born in 1584, and died in 1656, the same year with Hall and Usher,

\* Reason of Church Government, Book II.

published in his lifetime a few short tracts, of which the most important is a Discourse on Schism, which was printed in 1642, and is considered to have led the way in that bold revolt against the authority of the fathers, so much cried up by the preceding school of Andrews and Laud, upon which has since been founded what many hold to be the strongest defence of the Church of England against that of Rome. All Hales's writings were collected and published after his death, in 1659, in a quarto volume, bearing the title of 'Golden Remains of the Ever-Memorable Mr. John Hales,'—a designation which has stuck to his name. The main idea of his treatise on Schism was followed up with much greater vigour, and carried much further out, by Chillingworth—the Immortal Chillingworth, as he is styled by his admirers—in his famous work entitled 'The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation,' published in 1637. This is one of the most closely and keenly argued polemical treatises ever written: the style in which Chillingworth presses his reasoning home is like a charge with the bayonet. He was still only in his early manhood when he produced this remarkably able work; and he died in 1644 at the age of forty-two.

## JEREMY TAYLOR.

But the greatest name by far among the English divines of the middle of the seventeenth century is that of Jeremy Taylor. He was born in 1613, and died Bishop of Down and Connor in 1667; but most of his works were written, and many of them were also published, before the Restoration. In abundance of thought; in

ingenuity of argument; in opulence of imagination; in a soul made alike for the feeling of the sublime, of the beautiful, and of the picturesque; and in a style, answering in its compass, flexibility, and sweetness to the demands of all these powers, Taylor is unrivalled among the masters of English eloquence. He is the Spenser of our prose writers; and his prose is sometimes almost as musical as Spenser's verse. His Sermons, his Golden Grove, his Holy Living, and, still more, his Holy Dying and his Contemplations on the State of Man, all contain many passages, the beauty and splendour of which are hardly to be matched in any other English prose writer. Another of his most remarkable works, 'Theologia Eclectica, a Discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying,' first published in 1647, may be placed beside Milton's *Areopagitica*, published three years before, as doing for liberty of conscience the same service which that did for the liberty of the press. Both remain the most eloquent and comprehensive defences we yet possess of these two great rights.

#### FULLER.

The last of the theological writers of this era that we shall notice is Fuller. Dr. Thomas Fuller was born in 1604, and died in 1661; and in the course of his not very extended life produced a considerable number of literary works, of which his 'Church History of Britain from the Birth of Jesus Christ until the Year 1648,' which appeared in 1656, and his 'History of the Worthies of England,' which was not published till the year after his death, are the most important. He is a most

singular writer, full of verbal quibbling and quaintness of all kinds, but by far the most amusing and engaging of all the rhetoricians of this school, inasmuch as his conceits are rarely mere elaborate feats of ingenuity, but are usually informed either by a strong spirit of very peculiar humour and drollery, or sometimes even by a warmth and depth of feeling, of which too, strange as it may appear, the oddity of his phraseology is often not an ineffective exponent. He was certainly one of the greatest and truest wits that ever lived : he is witty not by any sort of effort at all, but as it were in spite of himself, or because he cannot help it. But wit, or the faculty of looking at and presenting things in their less obvious relations, is accompanied in him, not only by humour and heart, but by a considerable endowment of the irradiating power of fancy. Accordingly, what he writes is always lively and interesting, and sometimes even eloquent and poetical, though the eccentricities of his characteristic manner are not favourable, it must be confessed, to dignity or solemnity of style when attempted to be long sustained. Fuller, and it is no wonder, was one of the most popular writers, if not the most popular, of his own day : he observes himself, in the opening chapter of his ‘ Worthies,’ that hitherto no stationer (or publisher) had lost by him ; and what happened in regard to one of his works, his ‘ Holy State,’ is perhaps without example in the history of book-publishing :—it appeared originally in a folio volume in 1642, and is believed to have been four times reprinted before the Restoration ; but the publisher continued to describe the two last impressions on the title-page as still only the *third* edition, as if the demand had been so great that he felt (for whatever

reason) unwilling that its extent should be known. It is conjectured that his motive probably was "a desire to lull suspicion, and not to invite prohibition from the ruling powers."\*

Hardly anything can be found in Fuller that is dull or wearisome; and we may therefore safely indulge in a few extracts. We will begin with some passages from his Worthies, interesting or curious either for the manner or the matter:—

*Chapter I. The Design of the ensuing Work.*—England may not unfitly be compared to an House, not very great, but convenient; and the several Shires may properly be resembled to the rooms thereof. Now, as learned Master Camden, and painful Master Speed, with others, have described the rooms themselves; so it is our intention, God willing, to describe the furniture of those rooms; such eminent commodities which every county doth produce, with the persons of quality bred therein, and some other observables coincident with the same subject.

Cato, that great and grave philosopher, did commonly demand, when any new project was propounded unto him, "Cui bono?" What good would ensue in case the same was effected. A question more fit to be asked than facile to be answered, in all undertakings, especially in the setting forth of new books, insomuch that they themselves who complain that they are too many already help daily to make them more.

Know, then, I propound five ends to myself in this book. First, to gain some glory to God. Secondly, to preserve the memories of the Dead. Thirdly, to present examples to the Living. Fourthly, to entertain the Reader with delight. And lastly (which I am not ashamed publicly to profess), to procure some honest profit to Myself. If not so happy to obtain all, I will be

\* Preface by the Editor, Mr. James Nichols, to 'The Holy State,' 8vo., Lon. 1841.

joyful to attain some ; yea, contented, and thankful too, if gaining any (especially the first) of these ends, the motives of my endeavours.

First, glory to God, which ought to be the aim of all our actions, though too often our bow starts, our hand shakes, and so our arrow misseth the mark. Yet I hope that our describing so good a land, with the various fruits and fruitful varieties therein, will engage both writer and reader in gratitude to that God who hath been so bountiful to our nation. In order whereunto, I have not only always taken, but often sought, occasions to exhort to thankfulness ; hoping the same will be interpreted no straggling from my subject, but a closing with my calling.

Secondly, to preserve the memories of the Dead. A good name is an ointment poured out, smelt where it is not seen. It hath been the lawful desire of men in all ages to perpetuate their memories, thereby in some sort revenging themselves of mortality, though few have found out effectual means to perform it. For monuments made of wood are subject to be burnt ; of glass, to be broken ; of soft stone, to moulder ; of marble and metal (if escaping the teeth of time), to be demolished by the hand of covetousness ; so that, in my apprehension, the safest way to secure a memory from oblivion is (next his own virtues) by committing the same in writing to posterity.

Thirdly, to present examples to the Living ; having here precedents of all sorts and sizes ; of men famous for valour, wealth, wisdom, learning, religion, and bounty to the public, on which last we most largely insist. The scholar, being taxed by his writing-master for idleness in his absence, made a fair defence when pleading that his master had neither left him paper whereon, nor copy whereby, to write. But rich men will be without excuse, if not expressing their bounty in some proportion ; God having provided them paper enough (" The poor you have always with you "), and set them signal examples, as in our ensuing work will plainly appear.

Fourthly, to entertain the Reader with delight. I confess the subject is but dull in itself, to tell the time

and place of men's birth and death, their names, with the names and number of their books ; and therefore this bare skeleton, of time, place, and person, must be fleshed with some pleasant passages. To this intent I have purposely interlaced (not as meat, but as condiment) many delightful stories, that so the Reader, if he do not arise (which I hope and desire) *religiosior* or *doctior*, with more piety or learning, at least he may depart *jucundior*, with more pleasure and lawful delight.

Lastly, to procure moderate profit to Myself, in compensation of my pains. It was a proper question which plain-dealing Jacob pertinently propounded to Laban, his father-in-law : " And now when shall I provide for mine house also ? " Hitherto no stationer hath lost by me ; hereafter it will be high time for me (all things considered) to save for myself.

The following passages are from the account of Middlesex :—

*Leather*.—This, though common to all counties, is entered under the manufactures of Middlesex, because London therein is the staple place of slaughter ; and the hides of beasts there bought are generally tanned about Enfield in this county.

A word of the antiquity and usefulness of this commodity. Adam's first suit was of leaves, his second of leather. Hereof girdles, shoes, and many utensils (not to speak of whole houses of leather, I mean coaches) are made. Yea, I have read how Frederick the Second, Emperor of Germany, distressed to pay his army, made *monetam coriaceam*, coin of leather, making it current by his proclamation ; and afterward, when his soldiers repaid it into his exchequer, they received so much silver in lieu thereof.

Many good laws are made (and still one wanting to enforce the keeping of them) for the making of this merchantable commodity ; and yet still much unsaleable leather is sold in our markets.

The Lord Treasurer Burleigh, who always consulted

artificers in their own art, was indoctrinated by a cobbler in the true tanning of leather. This cobbler, taking a slice of bread, toasted it by degrees at some distance from the fire, turning it many times till it became brown and hard on both sides. 'This, my lord,' saith he, 'we good fellows call a tanned toast, done so well that it will last many mornings' draughts ; and leather thus leisurely tanned, and turned many times in the fat [vat], will prove serviceable, which otherwise will quickly fleet and rag out.' And, although that great statesman caused statutes to be made according to his instructions, complaints in this kind daily continue and increase. Surely, were all that occupation as honest as Simon the Tanner, the entertainer of Simon Peter in Joppa, they would be more conscientious in their calling. Let me add, what experience proveth true, though it be hard to assign the true cause thereof, that, when wheat is dear, leather always is cheap ; and when leather is dear, then wheat is cheap.

*The Buildings.*—. . . Osterly House, now Sir William Waller's, must not be forgotten, built in a park by Sir Thomas Gresham, who here magnificently entertained and lodged Queen Elizabeth. Her majesty found fault with the court of this house as too great ; affirming that it would appear more handsome if divided with a wall in the middle. What doth Sir Thomas, but in the night-time sends for workmen to London (money commands all things), who so speedily and silently apply their business that the next morning discovered that court double, which the night had left single before. It is questionable whether the Queen next day was more contented with the conformity to her fancy, or more pleased with the surprise and sudden performance thereof ; whilst her courtiers disported themselves with their several expressions ; some avowing it was no wonder he could so soon change a building who could build a change ; others (reflecting on some known differences in this knight's family) affirmed that any house is easier divided than united.

*London.*—It oweth its greatness, under God's divine providence, to the well-conditioned river of Thames,

which doth not, as some tyrant rivers in Europe, abuse its strength in a destructive way, but employeth its greatness in goodness, to be beneficial to commerce by the reciprocation of the tide therein. Hence it was that, when King James, offended with the city, threatened to remove his court to another place, the Lord Mayor (boldly enough) returned, that he might remove his court at his pleasure, but could not remove the river of Thames.

*Needles.* — The use hereof is right ancient, though sewing was before needles; for we read that our first parents made themselves aprons by sewing fig-leaves together, either fastening them with some glutinous matter, or with some sharp thing joining them together.

A pin is a blind needle; a needle, a pin with an eye. What nails do in solid, needles do in supple bodies, putting them together; only they remain not there formally, but virtually in the thread which they leave behind them. It is the woman's pencil; and embroidery (*vestis acu picta*) is the master-piece thereof. I say embroidery, much used in former, neglected in our age, wherein modern gallants, affecting variety of suits, desire that their clothes should be known by them, and not, as our ancestors, they by their clothes, one suit of state serving them for several solemnities.

This industrious instrument, Needle (*quasi ne idle*, as some will have it), maintaineth many millions. Yea, he who desireth a blessing on the plough and the needle (including that in the card and compass), comprehendeth most employments at home and abroad, by land and by sea.

All I will add is this: that the first fine Spanish needles in England were made in the reign of Queen Mary, in Cheapside, by a negro; but such his envy that he would teach his art to none, so that it died with him. More charitable was Elias Crowse, a German, who, coming over into England about the eighth of Queen Elizabeth, first taught us the making of Spanish needles; and since we have taught ourselves the using of them.

The following interesting passage, often referred to, is from the account of Warwickshire :—

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford on Avon in this county ; in whom three eminent poets may seem in some sort to be compounded : 1. Martial, in the war-like sound of his surname (whence some may conjecture him of a military extraction), hastivibrans, or Shakespeare. 2. Ovid, the most natural and witty of all poets ; and hence it was that Queen Elizabeth, coming into a grammar-school, made this extemporary verse,

Persius a Crabstaff, Bawdy Martial, Ovid a fine wag.

3. Plautus, who was an exact comedian, yet never any scholar ; as our Shakespeare, if alive, would confess himself. Add to all these, that, though his genius generally was jocular, and inclining him to festivity, yet he could, when so disposed, be solemn and serious, as appears by his tragedies ; so that Heraclitus himself (I mean if secret and unseen) might afford to smile at his comedies, they were so merry ; and Democritus scarce forbear to sigh at his tragedies, they were so mournful.

He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, *Poeta non fit, sed nascitur* ; one is not made, but born a poet. Indeed his learning was very little, so that, as Cornish diamonds are not polished by any lapidary, but are pointed, and smoothed even, as they are taken out of the earth, so nature itself was all the art which was used upon him.

Many were the wit combats betwixt him and Ben Jonson. Which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war. Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning ; solid, but slow, in his performances. Shakespeare, with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention. He died anno Domini 16 . . . , and was buried at Stratford upon Avon, the town of his nativity.

We may add another Warwickshire worthy, of a different order :—

Philemon Holland, where born is to me unknown, was bred in Trinity College in Cambridge a Doctor in Physic, and fixed himself in Coventry. He was the translator general in his age, so that those books alone of his turning into English will make a country gentleman a competent library for historians ; in so much that one saith,

“ Holland with his translations doth so fill us,  
He will not let *Suetonius* be *Tranquillus*.”

Indeed, some decry all translators as interlopers, spoiling the trade of learning, which should be driven amongst scholars alone. Such also allege that the best translations are works rather of industry than judgment, and, in easy authors, of faithfulness rather than industry ; that many be but bunglers, forcing the meaning of the authors they translate, “ forcing the lock when they cannot open it.”

But their opinion resents too much of envy, that such gentlemen who cannot repair to the fountain should be debarred access to the stream. Besides, it is unjust to charge all with the faults of some ; and a distinction must be made amongst translators betwixt cobblers and workmen, and our Holland had the true *knack* of translating.

Many of these his books he wrote with one pen, whereon he himself thus pleasantly versified :—

“ With one sole pen I writ this book,  
Made of a grey goose quill ;  
A pen it was when it I took,  
And a pen I leave it still.”

This monumental pen he solemnly kept, and showed to my reverend tutor, Doctor Samuel Ward. It seems he leaned very lightly on the neb thereof, though weightily enough in another sense, performing not slightly but solidly what he undertook.

But what commendeth him most to the praise of posterity is his translating Camden's *Britannia*, a translation

more than a translation, with many excellent additions not found in the Latin, done fifty years since in Master Camden's lifetime, not only with his knowledge and consent, but also, no doubt, by his desire and help. Yet such additions (discoverable in the former part with asterisks in the margin) with some antiquaries obtain not equal authenticalness with the rest. This eminent translator was translated to a better life anno Domini 16...

The translation of the translator took place in fact in 1636, when he had reached the venerable age of eighty-five, so that translating would seem to be not an unhealthy occupation. The above sketch is Fuller all over, in heart as well as in head and hand—the last touch especially, which, jest though it be, and upon a solemn subject, falls as gently and kindly as a tear on good old Philemon and his labours. The effect is as if we were told that even so gently fell the touch of death itself upon the ripe old man—even so easy, natural, and smiling, his labours over, was his leave-taking and exchange of this earth of many languages, the confusion or discord of which he had done his best to reduce, for that better world, where there is only one tongue, and translation is not needed or known. And Fuller's wit and jesting are always of this character; they have not in them a particle either of bitterness or of irreverence. No man ever (in writing at least) made so many jokes, good, bad, and indifferent; be the subject what it may, it does not matter; in season and out of season he is equally facetious; he cannot let slip an occasion of saying a good thing any more than a man who is tripped can keep himself from falling; the habit is as irresistible with him as the habit of breathing; and yet there is pro-

bably neither an ill-natured nor a profane witticism to be found in all that he has written. It is the sweetest-blooded wit that was ever infused into man or book. And how strong and weighty, as well as how gentle and beautiful, much of his writing is! The work perhaps in which he is oftenest eloquent and pathetic is that entitled 'The Holy State and the Profane State,' the former great popularity of which we have already noticed. It consists in fact of a series of moral, theological, and miscellaneous essays, interspersed with narratives, the first four books being occupied with the Holy State, the fifth with the Profane, many of the papers being delineations of different characters, such as the Good Wife, the Good Husband, the Good Physician, the Good Merchant, the Good Herald, under the former head,—the Witch, the Hypocrite, the Heretic, the Liar, under the latter. No writer whatever almost tells a story so well as Fuller—with so much life and point and gusto. The narratives, however, of the Holy and Profane State, are all too long for extract; and, in selecting from that work the last specimens we can afford to give of this admirable old writer, we must confine ourselves to a few passages that admit of being more easily separated from the context. We will begin with some from his chapter entitled 'The Good Soldier':—

A soldier is one of a lawful, necessary, commendable, and honourable profession; yea, God himself may seem to be one free of the company of soldiers, in that he styleth himself a "Man of War." Now, though many hate soldiers as the twigs of the rod war, wherewith God scourgeth wanton countries into repentance, yet is their calling so needful that, were not *some* soldiers, we

must be *all* soldiers, daily employed to defend our own, the world would grow so licentious.

*Maxim I. He keepeth a clear and quiet conscience in his breast, which otherwise will gnaw out the roots of all valour.*—For vicious soldiers are compassed with enemies on all sides; their foes without them, and an ambush within them of fleshly lusts, which, as St. Peter saith, “fight against the soul.” None fitter to go to war than those who have made their peace with God in Christ. For such a man’s soul is an impregnable fort. It cannot be scaled with ladders, for it reacheth up to heaven; nor be broken with batteries, for it is walled with brass; nor undermined by pioneers, for it is founded on a rock; nor betrayed by treason, for faith itself keeps it; nor be burnt by granadoes, for he can quench the fiery darts of the devil; nor be forced by famine, for “a good conscience is a continual feast.”

*Maxim III. He counts his prince’s lawful command to be his sufficient warrant to fight.*—In a defensive war, when his country is hostilely invaded, it is pity but *his* neck should hang in suspense with his conscience, that doubts to fight. In offensive war, though the case be harder, the common soldier is not to dispute, but do, his prince’s command. Otherwise princes, before they levy an army of soldiers, must first levy an army of casuists and confessors to satisfy each scrupulous soldier in point of right to the war; and the most cowardly will be the most conscientious, to multiply doubts eternally. Besides, causes of war are so complicated and perplexed, so many things falling in the prosecution, as may alter the original state thereof; and private soldiers have neither calling nor ability to dive into such mysteries. But, if the conscience of a counsellor or commander in chief remonstrates in himself the unlawfulness of this war, he is bound humbly to represent to his prince his reasons against it.

*Maxim IV. He esteemeth an hardship easy, through hopes of victory.*—Moneys are the sinews of war; yet, if these sinews should chance to be shrunk, and pay castally fall short, he takes a fit of this convulsion pa-

tiently. He is contented though in cold weather his hands must be their own fire, and warm themselves with working ; though he be better armed against their enemies than the weather, and his corslet wholler than his clothes ; though he hath more fasts and vigils in his almanac than the Romish church did ever enjoin. He patiently endureth drought, for desire of honour ; and one thirst quencheth another. In a word, though much indebted to his own back and belly, and unable to pay them, yet he hath credit himself, and confidently runs on ticket with himself, hoping the next victory will discharge all scores with advantage.

Along with this we will give the concluding head of the next chapter, entitled *The Good Sea Captain*, which is very characteristic :—

*He daily sees and duly considers God's wonders in the deep.*—Tell me, ye naturalists, who sounded the first march and retreat to the tide, “ Hither shalt thou come, and no further.” Why doth not the water recover his right over the earth, being higher in nature ? Whence came the salt, and who first boiled it, which made so much brine ? When the winds are not only wild in a storm, but even stark mad in an hurricane, who is it that restores them again to their wits, and brings them asleep in a calm ? Who made the mighty whales, which swim in a sea of water, and have a sea of oil swimming in them ? Who first taught the water to imitate the creatures on land, so that the sea is the stable of horse-fishes, the stall of kine-fishes, the sty of hog-fishes, the kennel of dog-fishes, and in all things the sea the ape of the land ? Whence grows the ambergris in the sea ? which is not so hard to find where it is as to know what it is. Was not God the first shipwright ? and all vessels on the water descended from the loins (or ribs rather) of Noah's ark ? or else, who durst be so bold, with a few crooked boards nailed together, a stick standing upright, and a rag tied to it, to adventure into the ocean ? What loadstone first touched the loadstone ? Or how first fell

at in love with the North, rather affecting that cold climate than the pleasant East, or fruitful South or West ? How comes that stone to know more than men, and find the way to the land in a mist ? In most of these men take sanctuary at *occulta qualitas* [some hidden quality] ; and complain that the room is dark, when their eyes are blind. Indeed, they are God's wonders ; and that seaman the greatest wonder of all for his blockishness, who, seeing them daily, neither takes notice of them, admires at them, nor is thankful for them.

Our last extract shall be the conclusion of his eloquent sketch of the Life of Bishop Ridley :—

His whole life was a letter written full of learning and religion, whereof his death was the seal. . . . Old Hugh Latimer was Ridley's partner at the stake, some time Bishop of Worcester, who crawled thither after him ; one who had lost more learning than many ever had who flout at his plain sermons, though his downright style was as necessary in that age as it would be ridiculous in ours. Indeed, he condescended to people's capacity ; and many men unjustly count those low in learning who indeed do but stoop to their auditors. Let me see any of our sharp wits do that with the edge, which his bluntness did with the back, of the knife, and persuade so many to restitution of ill-gotten goods. Though he came after Ridley to the stake, he got before him to heaven : his body, made tinder by age, was no sooner touched by the fire, but instantly this old Simeon had his *Nunc dimittis*, and brought the news to heaven that his brother was following after. But Ridley suffered with far more pain, the fire about him being not well made ; and yet one would think that age should be skilful in making such bonfires, as being much practised in them. The gunpowder that was given him did little service ; and his brother-in-law, out of desire to rid him out of pain, increased it (great grief will not give men leave to be wise with it !) heaping fuel upon him to no purpose ; so that neither the faggots which his enemies'

anger, nor his brother's good will, cast upon him, made the fire to burn kindly.

In like manner, not much before, his dear friend Master Hooper suffered with great torment ; the wind (which too often is the bellows of great fires) blowing it away from him once or twice. Of all the Martyrs in those days, these two endured most pain ; it being true that each of them *Quaerebat in ignibus ignes*—And still he did desire for fire in midst of fire ;—both desiring to burn, and yet both their upper parts were but Confessors, when their lower parts were Martyrs and burnt to ashes. Thus God, where he hath given the stronger faith, he layeth on the stronger pain. And so we leave them going up to heaven, like Elijah, in a chariot of fire.

#### FELTHAM'S RESOLVES.—MICROCOSMOGRAPHY.

This volume of Fuller's, 'The Holy and the Profane State,' may be considered as belonging to a class of books the best of which seem to have been more popular than any other works, out of the region of poetry and fiction, among our ancestors of the seventeenth century. Bacon's Essays, for instance, which first appeared in 1597, were reprinted in 1606, in 1612, in 1613, and in 1625, during the lifetime of the author ; and after his death new editions were still more rapidly called for. Another favourite volume of this kind was the 'Resolves, Divine, Moral, and Political,' of Owen Feltham, the first edition of which has the date of 1628, and of which there were re-impressions in 1631, in 1634, in 1636, in 1647, in 1661, in 1670, in 1677, and in 1696. Feltham tells us himself that a portion of his book was written when he was only eighteen ; and from this statement it has been conjectured that he was probably born about 1610 : he is supposed to have been still alive when the 1677 edition of his Resolves

came out. Very little more is known of his history than that he appears to have resided for the greater part of his life in the house of the Earl of Thomond,—Oldys says, on the contemporary report of Mr. William Loughton, schoolmaster in Kensington, who was related to Feltham, in quality of gentleman of the horse or secretary. The later editions of the Resolves are dedicated to the Countess of Thomond, a daughter of Sir George Fermor (ancestor of the Earls of Pomfret); and the author in his address states that most of them were drawn up under her roof. The work is divided into two Parts or Centuries (the last being that first written and published); and consists of a hundred and forty-six short papers or essays on moral and theological subjects. Like those of Bacon, most of Feltham's essays have a practical character or object, aiming, in Bacon's own phrase, to carry home some useful truth or maxim to the business and bosoms of their readers; they are, what Bacon expressly calls his, 'Counsels, Civil and Moral'; and hence no doubt in great part the acceptance they met with. The difference of the times, however, as well as of the writers, is evidenced by the more decidedly religious spirit which leavens Feltham's book. It is the spirit which was generally prevalent in England for the quarter of a century before the breaking out of the civil war—neither High Church nor Puritan, but yet decidedly a spirit of attachment both to the essential doctrines of Christianity and to the peculiar system of the Established Church. It was a state of feeling which in more excited times would be called luke-warm; but it was sincerely opposed to all licentiousness or irregularity both of conduct and opinion, and was firmly though not passionately both moral and Christian.

It was in short the sort of religious feeling natural to tranquil and tolerably prosperous times ; and Feltham's work is an exact representative of its character and the extent of its views. The work therefore was fortunate in hitting the reigning taste or fashion ; but it was also a work of remarkable ability—not indeed presenting the subtle inquisition and large speculation in which the *Essays* of Bacon abound, but still full of ingenious and sagacious remarks, always clearly, sometimes strikingly, expressed. Like all writers who have ever been long popular, indeed, Feltham owed half his success to his style—to a shaping of his thoughts which set their substance off to the best advantage, or at the very least enabled what of justness or worth was in them to be most clearly and readily apprehended. There is little or nothing, however, of poetry or picturesqueness in Feltham's writing ; it is clear, manly, and sufficiently expressive, but has no peculiar raciness or felicity. Another preceding work that still more resembles Fuller's is the little volume entitled 'Microcosmography, or a Piece of the World Discovered, in Essays and Characters,' which in recent times has been usually ascribed to Dr. John Earle, who after the Restoration was made Bishop, first of Worcester and then of Salisbury, though it does not appear upon what sufficient evidence. All that we can gather upon the point from Dr. Bliss's excellent modern edition (8vo. Lon. 1811) is that the editor of the previous edition of 1786 states himself to have lately discovered that the work was written by Bishop Earle, "from very good authority." "I regret extremely," says Dr. Bliss, in a note, "that I am unable to put the reader in possession of this very acute discoverer's name." The work, by a

mistake originating with Langbaine, in his 'Dramatic Poets,' had formerly been attributed to Edward Blount, its first publisher, who was a bookseller in St. Paul's churchyard, and also a man of letters. He was, to the honour, as Dr. Bliss observes, of his taste and judgment,\* one of the partners in the first edition of the plays of Shakspeare. Earle is the author of a Latin version of the 'Eikon Basiliké,' published at the Hague in 1649; he is said to have also translated Hooker's 'Ecclesiastical Polity' into the same language; he appears to have had in early life a high reputation both for classic learning and skill in English verse; but, with the exception of the Microcosmography, his only other performances that are now known to exist are three short elegies, which Dr. Bliss has printed. He died in 1665, and was probably born about the beginning of the century. The 'Microcosmography' was first printed in 1628; a second edition, "much enlarged," came out in 1629, printed for Robert Alcot, the publisher of the second (1632) folio edition of Shakspeare; the next mentioned by Dr. Bliss is a sixth, also printed for Alcot, in 1633; there was a seventh in 1638; after which the demand for the book seems to have been interrupted by the national confusions; but an eighth edition of it appeared in 1650. The style of the 'Microcosmography' is much more antique and peculiar than that of Feltham's 'Resolves'; and the subjects are also of more temporary interest, which may account for its having earlier dropt into comparative neglect. It is not only highly curious, however, as a record of the manners and customs of our ancestors, but is marked by strong graphic talent, and occasionally by considerable force of satire and humour. The characters are seventy-

eight in all, comprising both general divisions of men, and also many of the most remarkable among the official and other social distinctions of the time. As a specimen we will transcribe that of 'An Alderman,' which is one of the shortest :—

He is venerable in his gown, more in his beard, where-with he sets not forth so much his own as the face of a city. You must look on him as one of the town gates, and consider him not as a body, but a corporation. His eminency above others hath made him a man of worship, for he had never been preferred but that he was worth thousands. He oversees the commonwealth as his shop, and it is an argument of his policy that he has thriven by his craft. He is a rigorous magistrate in his ward ; yet his scale of justice is suspected, lest it be like the balances in his warehouse. A ponderous man he is, and substantial, for his weight is commonly extraordinary, and in his preferment nothing rises so much as his belly. His head is of no great depth, yet well furnished ; and, when it is in conjunction with his brethren, may bring forth a city apophthegm, or some such sage matter. He is one that will not hastily run into error ; for he treads with great deliberation, and his judgment consists much in his pace. His discourse is commonly the annals of his mayoralty, and what good government there was in the days of his gold chain, though the door-posts were the only things that suffered reformation.\* He seems most sincerely religious, especially on solemn days ; for he comes often to church, to make a show, and is a part of the quire hangings. He is the highest stair of his profession, and an example to his trade what in time they may come

\* "It was usual for public officers to have painted or gilded posts at their doors, on which proclamations, and other documents of that description were placed, in order to be read by the populace . . . . The *reformation* means that they were, in the language of our modern church wardens, 'repaired and beautified' during the reign of our alderman."—*Bliss*.

to. He makes very much of his authority, but more of his satin doublet, which, though of good years, bears its age very well, and looks fresh every Sunday; but his scarlet gown is a monument, and lasts from generation to generation.

The author of the 'Microcosmography' is more decidedly or undisguisedly anti-puritanical than Feltham. One of his severest sketches is that of 'A She precise Hypocrite,' of whom, among other hard things, he says—

She is a non-conformist in a close stomacher and ruff of Geneva print,\* and her purity consists much in her linen . . . . Her devotion at the church is much in the turning up of her eye, and turning down the leaf in her book when she hears named chapter and verse. When she comes home she commends the sermon for the Scripture and two hours. She loves preaching better than praying, and, of preachers, lecturers; and thinks the week-day's exercise far more edifying than the Sunday's. Her oftest gossipings are Sabbath-day's journeys, where (though an enemy to superstition) she will go in pilgrimage five mile to a silenced minister, when there is

\* "Strict devotees were, I believe, noted for the smallness and precision of their *ruffs*, which were termed *in print*, from the exactness of the folds. . . . The term of *Geneva print* probably arose from the minuteness of the type used at Geneva. . . . It is, I think, clear that a *ruff* of *Geneva print* means a *small, closely-folded ruff*, which was the distinction of a non-conformist."—Bliss. The small Geneva print referred to, we apprehend, was the type used in the common copies of the Geneva translation of the Bible (Coverdale's second version, first published in 1560), which were adapted for the pocket, and were of smaller size than any other edition. This was the favourite Bible of the Puritans: and these small copies were the "little pocket-bibles, with gilt leaves" their quotations from which Selden used to hint to his brethren of the Westminster Assembly might not always be found exactly conformable to the original Greek or Hebrew.

a better sermon in her own parish. She doubts of the Virgin Mary's salvation, but knows her own place in heaven as perfectly as the pew she has a key to. She is so taken up with faith she has no room for charity, and understands no good works but what are wrought on the sampler. . . . . She rails at other women by the names of Jezebel and Delilah ; and calls her own daughters Rebecca and Abigail, and not Ann but Hannah. She suffers them not to learn on the virginals, because of their affinity with organs ; but is reconciled to the bells for the chimes sake, since they were reformed to the tune of a psalm. She overflows so with Bible, that she spills it upon every occasion, and will not cudgel her maids without Scripture. It is a question whether she is more troubled with the devil, or the devil with her : she is always challenging and daring him, and her weapon is *The Practice of Piety*. Nothing angers her so much as that women cannot preach, and in this point only [she] thinks the Brownists erroneous ; but what she cannot at the church she does at the table, where she prattles more than any against sense and Antichrist, till a capon's wing silence her. She expounds the priests of Baal reading ministers, and thinks the salvation of that parish as desperate as the Turks'. She is a main derider, to her capacity, of those that are not her preachers, and censures all sermons but bad ones. . . . .

Many other books of characters were published in the seventeenth century. Dr. Bliss, in an Appendix to his edition of the 'Microcosmography,' has enumerated and given an account of fifty-six that appeared between 1600 and 1700, besides one, Harman's 'Caveat for Common Cursitors,' which has been reprinted in our own day, and which was first published in 1567.

#### SIR THOMAS BROWNE.

Another of the most original and peculiar writers of the middle portion of the seventeenth century is Sir Tho-

mas Browne, the celebrated author of the 'Religio Medici,' published in 1642; the 'Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Inquiries into Vulgar and Common Errors,' in 1646; and the 'Hydriotaphia, Urn Burial, or a Discourse on the Sepulchral Urns found in Norfolk;' and 'The Garden of Cyrus, or the Quincuncial Lozenge, or Network Plantations of the Ancients, Artificially, Naturally, Mystically Considered,' which appeared together in 1658. Browne died in 1682, at the age of seventy-seven; but he published nothing after the Restoration, though some additional tracts found among his papers were given to the world after his death. The writer of a late spirited review of Browne's literary productions, and the characteristics of his singular genius, has sketched the history of his successive acts of authorship in a lively and striking passage:—"He had no sympathy with the great business of men. In that awful year when Charles I. went in person to seize five members of the Commons' House,—when the streets resounded with shouts of 'Privilege of parliament,' and the king's coach was assailed by the prophetic cry, 'To your tents, O Israel,'—in that year, in fact, when the civil war first broke out, and when most men of literary power were drawn by the excitement of the crisis into patriotic controversy on either side,—appeared the calm and meditative reveries of the *Religio Medici*. The war raged on. It was a struggle between all the elements of government. England was torn by convulsion and red with blood. But Browne was tranquilly preparing his *Pseudodoxia Epidemica*; as if errors about basilisks and griffins were the paramount and fatal epidemic of the time; and it was published in due order in that year when the cause which

the author advocated, as far as he could advocate anything political, lay at its last gasp. The king dies on the scaffold. The Protectorate succeeds. Men are again fighting on paper the solemn cause already decided in the field. Drawn from visions more sublime,—forsaking studies more intricate and vast than those of the poetical Sage of Norwich,—diverging from a career bounded by the most splendid goal,—foremost in the ranks shines the flaming sword of Milton: Sir Thomas Browne is lost in the quincunx of the ancient gardens; and the year 1658 beheld the death of Oliver Cromwell, and the publication of the *Hydriotaphia*.\* The writings of Sir Thomas Browne, to be relished or rightly appreciated, must of course be read in the spirit suited to the species of literature to which they belong. If we look for matter-of-fact information in a poem, we are likely to be disappointed; and so are we likewise, if we go for the passionate or pictured style of poetry to an encyclopaedia. Browne's works, with all their varied learning, contain very little positive information that can now be accounted of much value; very little even of direct moral or economical counsel by which any person could greatly profit; very little, in short, of anything that will either put money in a man's pocket, or actual knowledge in his head. Assuredly the interest with which they were perused, and the charm that was found to belong to them, could not at any time have been due, except in very small part indeed, to the estimation in which their readers held such pieces of intelligence as that the phoenix is but a fable of the poets, and that the griffin exists only in the zoology of the heralds. It would fare ill with Browne if

\* Edinburgh Review for October, 1836; No. 129, p. 34.

the worth of his books were to be tried by the amount of what they contain of this kind of information, or, indeed, of any other kind of what is commonly called useful knowledge ; for, in truth, he has done his best to diffuse a good many vulgar errors as monstrous as any he had corrected. For that matter, if his readers were to continue to believe with him in astrology and witchcraft, we shall all agree that it was of very little consequence what faith they might hold touching the phoenix and the griffin. Mr. Hallam, we think, has, in a manner which is not usual with him, fallen somewhat into this error of applying a false test in the judgment he has passed upon Browne. It is, no doubt, quite true that the Inquiry into Vulgar Errors " scarcely raises a high notion of Browne himself as a philosopher, or of the state of physical knowledge in England ;" \* that the *Religio Medici* shows its author to have been " far removed from real philosophy, both by his turn of mind and by the nature of his erudition ;" and likewise that " he seldom reasons," that " his thoughts are desultory," that " sometimes he appears sceptical or paradoxical," but that " credulity and deference to authority prevail " in his habits of thinking.† Understanding *philosophy* in the sense in which the term is here used, that is to say, as meaning the sifting and separation of fact from fiction, it may be admitted that there is not much of that in Sir Thomas Browne ; his works are all rather marked by a very curious and piquant intermixture of the two. Of course, such being the case, what he writes is not to be considered solely or even principally with reference to its absolute truth or falsehood, but rather with reference to

\* Lit. of Eur. iv. 94.

† Id. iii. 346.

its relative truth and significance as an expression of some feeling or notion, or other idiosyncracy of the very singular and interesting mind from which it has proceeded. Read in this spirit, the works of Sir Thomas Browne, more especially his 'Religio Medici' and his 'Urn Burial,' will be found among the richest in our literature—full of uncommon thoughts, and trains of meditation leading far away into the dimmest inner chambers of life and death—and also of an eloquence, sometimes fantastic, but always striking, not seldom pathetic, and in its greatest passages gorgeous with the emblazonry of a warm imagination. Out of such a writer the rightly attuned and sympathising mind will draw many things more precious than any mere facts.

#### SIR JAMES HARRINGTON.

We can merely mention Sir James Harrington's political romance entitled 'Oceana,' which was published in 1656. Harrington's leading principles are, that the natural element of power in states is property; and that, of all kinds of property, that in land is the most important, possessing, indeed, certain characteristics which distinguish it, in its natural and political action, from all other property. "In general," observes Mr. Hallam, "it may be said of Harrington that he is prolix, dull, pedantic, yet seldom profound; but sometimes redeems himself by just observations."\* This is true in so far as respects the style of the 'Oceana'; but it hardly does justice to the ingenuity, the truth, and the importance of certain of Harrington's views and deductions in the philosophy of politics. If he has not the merit of absolute

\* Lit. of Eur. iv. 367.

originality in his main propositions, they had at least never been so clearly expounded and demonstrated by any preceding writer.

## NEWSPAPERS.

It has lately been satisfactorily shown that the three newspapers entitled 'The English Mercurie,' Nos. 50, 51, and 54, preserved among Dr. Birch's historical collections in the British Museum, professing to be "published by authority, for the contradiction of false reports," at the time of the attack of the Spanish Armada, on the credit of which the invention of newspapers used to be attributed to Lord Burleigh, are modern forgeries.\* Occasional pamphlets, containing foreign news, began to be published in England towards the close of the reign of James I. The earliest that has been met with is entitled 'News out of Holland,' dated 1619; and other similar papers of news from different foreign countries are extant which appeared in 1620, 1621, and 1622. The first of these news-pamphlets which came out at regular intervals appears to have been that entitled 'The News of the Present Week,' edited by Nathaniel Butler, which was started in 1622, in the early days of the Thirty Years' War, and was continued, in conformity with its title, as a weekly publication. But the proper era of English newspapers, at least of those containing domestic intelligence, commences with the Long Parliament. The earliest that has been discovered is a quarto pamphlet of a few leaves, entitled 'The Diurnal Occurrences, or Daily Proceedings of Both Houses, in this great and

\* See 'A Letter to Antonio Panizzi, Esq., By Thomas Watts, of the British Museum,' 8vo. Lon. 1839.

happy parliament, from the 3rd of November, 1640, to the 3rd of November, 1641 : London, printed for William Cooke, and are to be sold at his shop at Furnival's Inn Gate, in Holborn, 1641.\* More than a hundred newspapers, with different titles, appear to have been published between this date and the death of the king, and upwards of eighty others between that event and the Restoration.† “When hostilities commenced,” says the writer from whom we derive this information, “every event, during a most eventful period, had its own historian, who communicated *News from Hell*, *Truths from York*, *Warranted Tidings from Ireland*, and *Special Passages from several places*. These were all occasional papers. Impatient, however, as a distracted people were for information, the news were never distributed daily. The various newspapers were published weekly at first; but in the progress of events, and the ardour of curiosity, they were distributed twice or thrice in every week.‡ Such were the French Intelligencer, the Dutch Spy, the Irish Mercury, and the Scots Dove, the Parliament Kite, and the Secret Owl. *Mercurius Acheronticus* brought them hebdomadal *News from Hell*; *Mercurius Democritus* communicated wonderful news from the World in the Moon; the *Laughing Mercury* gave perfect news from the Antipodes; and *Mercurius Mastix* faithfully

\* See Chronological List of Newspapers from the Epoch of the Civil Wars, in Chalmers's Life of Ruddiman, pp. 404—442.

† See Chalmers's Life of Ruddiman, p. 114.

‡ In December, 1642, however, Spalding, the Aberdeen annalist, in a passage which Mr. Chalmers has quoted, tells us that “now printed papers daily came from London, called *Diurnal Occurrences*, declaring what is done in parliament.”—Vol. i. p. 336.

leashed all Scouts, Mercuries, Posts, Spies, and other Intelligencers." \* Besides the newspapers, also, the great political and religious questions of the time were debated, as already mentioned, in a prodigious multitude of separate pamphlets, which appear to have been read quite as universally and as eagerly. It has been stated that the number of such pamphlets printed in the twenty years from the meeting of the Long Parliament to the Restoration was not less than thirty thousand, which would give a rate of four or five new ones every day.

Where our modern newspapers begin, the series of our old chroniclers closes with Sir Richard Baker's 'Chronicle of the Kings of England,' written while its author was confined for debt in the Fleet Prison, where he died in 1645, and first published in a folio volume in 1641. It was several times reprinted, and was a great favourite with our ancestors for two or three succeeding generations; but it has now lost all interest, except for a few passages relating to the author's own time. Baker, however, himself declares it to be compiled "with so great care and diligence, that, if all others were lost, this only will be sufficient to inform posterity of all passages memorable or worthy to be known." Sir Richard and his Chronicle are now popularly remembered principally as the great historical authorities of Addison's incomparable Sir Roger de Coverley.†

## CLASSICAL LEARNING.

Almost the only great work in the department of ancient scholarship that appeared in England in the reigns of James I. and Charles I. was the magnificent edition

\* Chalmers, p. 116.

† See Spectator, No 329.

of Chrysostom, in eight volumes folio, by Sir Henry Savile, printed at Eton, where Savile was provost of the college, in 1612. "The Greek language, however," observes Mr. Hallam, "was now much studied; the age of James and Charles was truly learned; our writers are prodigal of an abundant erudition, which embraces a far wider range of authors than are now read; the philosophers of every class, the poets, the historians and orators of Greece, to whom few comparatively had paid regard in the days of Elizabeth, seem as familiar to the miscellaneous writers of her next successors as the fathers of the church are to the theologians. A few, like Jeremy Taylor, are equally copious in their libations from both streams. But, though thus deeply read in ancient learning, our old scholars are not very critical in philology."\* The glory of English erudition in the days of the Commonwealth, though of erudition formed in the preceding age, and by men all attached to the cause upon the ruin of which the Commonwealth was reared, is the Polyglott Bible, commonly called the London Polyglott, edited by Brian Walton, in six volumes folio, the first of which appeared in 1654, the second in 1655, the third in 1656, and the three last in 1657. In this great work, which, taken altogether, including the 'Lexicon Heptaglotton' of Dr. Edmund Castell, added, in two volumes folio, in 1669, still remains without a rival, the Scriptures are given, entirely or partially, in nine different languages, namely, Hebrew, Chaldee, Samaritan, Syrian, Arabic, Persian, Ethiopic, Greek, and Latin. Walton was, upon the Restoration, made Bishop of Chester, but he died in 1661. And to the works written by Englishmen in the Latin:

\* Lit. of Eur. iii. 12.

language within this period, are to be added, besides the splendid 'Defensio pro Populo Anglicano,' and 'Defensio Secunda' of Milton, which we have already mentioned, the 'De Primordiis Ecclesiarum Britannicarum' (afterwards entitled 'Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates'), 1639, and the 'Annales Utriusque Testamenti,' 1650 and 1654, of the learned Archbishop Usher.

## LITERATURE OF THE COMMONWEALTH.

It thus appears that the age of the Civil War and the Commonwealth does not present an absolute blank in the history of our highest literature; but, unless we are to except the *Areopagitica* of Milton, the *Liberty of Prophesying* and a few other controversial or theological treatises of Jeremy Taylor, some publications by Fuller, and the successive apocalypses of the imperturbable dreamer of Norwich, no work of genius of the first class appeared in England in the twenty years from the meeting of the Long Parliament to the Restoration; and the literary productions having any enduring life in them at all, that are to be assigned to that space, make but a very scanty sprinkling. It was a time when men wrote and thought, as they acted, merely for the passing moment. The unprinted plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, indeed, were now sent to the press, as well as other dramatic works written in the last age, the theatres, by which they used to be published in another way, being shut up—a significant intimation, rather than anything else, that the great age of the drama was at an end. A new play continued to drop occasionally from the commonplace pen of Shirley—almost the solitary successor of the Shakspeares,

the Fletchers, the Jonsons, the Massingers, the Fords, and the rest of that bright throng. All other poetry, as well as dramatic poetry, was nearly silent—hushed partly by the din of arms and of theological and political strife, more by the frown of triumphant puritanism, boasting to itself that it had put down all the other fine arts as well as poetry, never again to lift their heads in England. It is observable that even the confusion of the contest that lasted till after the king's death did not so completely banish the muses, or drown their voice, as did the grim tranquillity under the sway of the parliament that followed. The time of the war, besides the treatises just alluded to of Milton, Taylor, Fuller, and Browne, produced the Cooper's Hill and some other poetical pieces by Denham, and the republication of the Comus and other early poems of Milton; the collection of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, and Cowley's volume entitled 'The Mistress,' appeared in 1647, in the short interval of doubtful quiet between the first and the second war; the volume of Herrick's poetry was published the next year, while the second war was still raging, or immediately after its close; Lovelace's first volume, in 1649, probably before the execution of the king. Hobbes's Leviathan, and one or two other treatises of his, all written some time before, were printed at London in 1650 and 1651, while the author was resident in Paris. For some years from this date the blank is nearly absolute. Then, when the more liberal despotism of Cromwell had displaced the Presbyterian moroseness of the parliament, we have Fuller's Church History printed in 1655; Harrington's Oceana, and the collection of Cowley's poetry, in 1656; Browne's *Hydriotaphia* and *Garden of*

Cyrus, in 1658 ; Lovelace's second volume, and Hales's Remains, in 1659 ; together with two or three philosophical publications by Hobbes, and a few short pieces in verse by Waller, of which the most famous is his Panegyric on Oliver Cromwell, written after the Protector's death, an occasion which also afforded its first considerable theme to the ripening genius of Dryden. It is to be noted, moreover, that, with one illustrious exception, none of the writers that have been named belonged to the prevailing faction. If Waller and Dryden took that side in their verses for a moment, it must be admitted that they both amply made up for their brief conformity ; Denham, Browne, Taylor, Herrick, Lovelace, Fuller, Hales, Hobbes, Cowley, were all consistent, most of them ardent, royalists ; Harrington was a theoretical republican, but even he was a royalist by personal attachments ; Milton alone was in life and heart a Commonwealth-man and a Cromwellian.

## POETRY OF MILTON.

From the appearance of his minor poems, in 1645, Milton had published no poetry, with the exception of a sonnet to Henry Lawes, the musician, prefixed to a collection of Psalm tunes by that composer in 1648, till he gave to the world his *Paradise Lost*, in Ten Books, in 1667. In 1671 appeared his *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* ; in 1673 a new edition of his minor poems, with nine new sonnets and other additions ; and in 1674, what is properly the second edition of the *Paradise Lost*, now divided into Twelve Books. He died on Sunday the 8th of November, in that year, when within about a month of completing the sixty-sixth year of his

age. His prose writings have been already noticed. Verse, however, was the form in which his genius had earliest expressed itself, and also that in which he had first come forth as an author. Passing over his paraphrases of one or two Psalms, done at a still earlier age, we have abundant promise of the future great poet in his lines 'On the Death of a Fair Infant,' beginning,

O fairest flower, no sooner blown but blasted,

written in his seventeenth year; and still more in the 'College Exercise,' written in his nineteenth year. A portion of this latter is almost as prophetic as it is beautiful; and, as the verses have not been much noticed,\* we will here give a few of them:—

Hail, native Language, that by sinews weak  
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,  
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,  
Half-unpronounced, slide through my infant lips:

I have some naked thoughts that rove about,  
And loudly knock to have their passage out;  
And, weary of their place, do only stay  
Till thou hast deck'd them in their best array.

Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,  
Thy service in some graver subject use,  
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,  
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound;  
Such where the deep transported mind may soar  
Above the wheeling poles, and at heaven's door  
Look in, and see each blissful deity  
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,  
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings  
To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings

\* Mr. Hallam, in his late work on the Literature of Europe, inadvertently assumes that we have no English verse of Milton's written before his twenty-second year.

Immortal nectar to her kingly sire :  
Then, passing through the spheres of watchful fire,  
And misty regions of wide air next under,  
And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,  
May tell at length how green-eyed Neptune raves,  
In heaven's defiance mustering all his waves ;  
Then sing of secret things that came to pass  
When beldame Nature in her cradle was ;  
And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old,  
Such as the wise Demodocus once told  
In solemn songs at King Alcinous' feast,  
While sad Ulysses' soul and all the rest  
Are held with his melodious harmony  
In willing chains and sweet captivity.

This was written in 1627. Fourteen years later, after his return from Italy, where some of his juvenile Latin compositions, and some others in the same language, which, as he tells us, he "had shifted in scarcity of books and conveniences to patch up amongst them, were received with written encomiums, which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the Alps;" and when, assenting in so far to these commendations, and not less to an inward prompting which now grew daily upon him, he had ventured to indulge the hope that, by labour and study—"which I take," he nobly says, "to be my portion in this life"—joined with the strong propensity of nature, he "might perhaps leave something so written in after-times as they should not willingly let it die"—he continued still inclined to fix all the industry and art he could unite to the adorning of his native tongue—or, as he goes on to say, "to be an interpreter and relater of the best and sagest things among mine own citizens, throughout this island, in the mother-dialect ;—that what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of

old, did for their country, I, in my proportion, with this over and above of being a Christian, might do for mine ; not caring to be once named abroad, though perhaps I could attain to that, but content with these British islands as my world ;” and he again, more distinctly than before, though still only in general expressions, announced the great design, “ of highest hope and hardest attempting,” which he proposed to himself one day to accomplish—whether in the epic form, as exemplified by Homer, Virgil, and Tasso, or after the dramatic, “ wherein Sophocles and Euripides reign”—or in the style of “ those magnific odes and hymns” of Pindarus and Callimachus ; not forgetting that of all these kinds of writing the highest models are to be found in the Holy Scriptures—in the Book of Job, in the Song of Solomon and the Apocalypse of St. John, in the frequent songs interspersed throughout the Law and the Prophets. “ The thing which I had to say,” concluded this remarkable announcement, “ and those intentions which have lived within me ever since I could conceive myself anything worth to my country, I return to crave excuse that urgent reason hath plucked from me by an abortive and foredated discovery. And the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above man’s to promise ; but that none hath by more studious ways endeavoured, and with more unwearied spirit that none shall, that I dare almost aver of myself, as far as life and free leisure will extend ; and that the land had once enfranchised herself from this impertinent yoke of prelacy, under whose inquisitorious and tyrannical duncery no free and splendid wit can flourish. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader, that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him

toward the payment of what I am now indebted ; as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite ; nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her Siren daughters ; but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowldgo, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs. Till which in some measure be accomplished, at mine own peril and cost I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loth to hazard as much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them.”\*

Before this, Milton had published of his poetry only his *Comus* and *Lycidas* ; the former in 1637, the latter with some other Cambridge verses on the same occasion, the loss at sea of his friend Edward King, in 1638 ; but, besides some of his sonnets and other minor pieces, he had also written the fragment entitled *Arcades*, and the two companion poems the *L'Allegro* and the *Il Penseroso*. These productions already attested the worthy successor of the greatest writers of English verse in the preceding age—recalling the fancy and the melody of the minor poems of Spenser and Shakspeare, and of the *Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher. The *Comus*, indeed, might be considered as an avowed imitation of the last-mentioned production. The resemblance in poetical

\* *The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelacy* (published in 1641).

character between the two sylvan dramas of Fletcher and Milton is very close ; and they may be said to stand apart from all else in our literature—for Ben Jonson's *Sad Shepherd* is not for a moment to be compared with either, and in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* Shakspeare, ever creative, passionate, and dramatic beyond all other writers, has soared so high above both, whether we look to the supernatural part of his fable or to its scenes of human interest, that we are little reminded of his peopled woodlands, his fairies, his lovers, or his glorious “rude mechanicals,” either by the *Faithful Shepherdess* or the *Comus*. Of these two compositions, Milton's must be admitted to have the higher moral inspiration, and it is also the more elaborate and exact as a piece of writing ; but in all that goes to make up dramatic effect, in the involvement and conduct of the story, and in the eloquence of natural feeling, Fletcher's is decidedly superior. It has been remarked that even in Shakspeare's early narrative poems—his *Venus and Adonis*, and his *Tarquin and Lucrece*—we may discern the future great dramatist by the full and unwithholding abandonment with which he there projects himself into whatever character he brings forward, and the power of vivid conception with which he realizes the visionary scene, and brings it around him almost in the distinctness of broad daylight, as shown by a peculiar directness and life of expression evidently coming everywhere unsought, and escaping from his pen, one might almost say without his own consciousness,—without apparently any feeling, at least, of either art exercised orfeat achieved.\* In the case of Milton, on

\* See this illustrated in Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, vol. ii.

the contrary, his first published poem and earliest poetical attempt of any considerable extent, although in the dramatic form, affords abundant evidence that his genius was not dramatic. *Comus* is an exquisitely beautiful poem, but nearly destitute of everything we more especially look for in a drama—of passion, of character, of story, of action or movement of any kind. It flows on in a continued stream of eloquence, fancy, and most melodious versification ; but there is no dialogue, properly so called, no replication of diverse emotions or natures ; it is **Milton** alone who sings or declaims all the while,—sometimes of course on one side of the argument, sometimes on the other, and not, it may be, without changing his attitude and the tone of his voice, but still speaking only from one head, from one heart, from one ever-present and ever-dominant constitution of being. And from this imprisonment within himself **Milton** never escapes, either in his dramatic or in his other poetry ; it is the characteristic which distinguishes him not only from our great dramatists, but also from other great epic and narrative poets. His poetry has been sometimes described as to an unusual degree wanting in the expression of his own personal feelings ; and, notwithstanding some remarkable instances of exception, not only in his minor pieces, but in his great epic, the remark is true in a certain sense. He is no habitual brooder over his own emotions, no self-dissector, no systematic resorter for inspiration to the accidents of his own personal history. His subject in some degree forbade this ; his proud and lofty nature still more withheld him from it. But, although disdaining thus to picture himself at full length either for our pity or admiration, he has yet impressed the stamp of

his own individuality—of his own character, moral as well as intellectual—as deep on all he has written as if his theme had been ever so directly himself. Compare him in this respect with Homer. We scarcely conceive of the old Greek poet as having a sentient existence at all, any more than we do of the sea or the breezes of heaven, whose music his continuous, undulating verse, ever various, ever the same, resembles. Who in the delineation of the wrath of Achilles finds a trace of the temper or character of the delineator? Who in Milton's Satan does not recognise much of Milton himself? But, although the spirit of his poetry is thus essentially egotistic, the range of his poetic power is not thereby confined within narrow limits. He had not the "myriad-minded" nature of Shakspeare—the all-penetrating sympathy by which the greatest of dramatists could transform himself for the time into any one of the other existences around him, no matter how high, no matter how low: conceive the haughty genius of Milton employed in the task of developing such a character as Justice Shallow, or Bottom the weaver, or a score of others to be found in the long, various, brilliant procession headed by Falstaff and ending with Dogberry! Nothing of this kind he could have performed much better than the most ordinarily gifted of the sons of men; he had no more the wit or humour requisite for it than he had the power of intense and universal sympathy. But his proper region was still a vast one; and there, his vision, though always tinged with the colour of his own passions and opinions, was, notwithstanding, both as far reaching and as searching as any poet's ever was. In its style or form his poetry may

be considered to belong rudimentally to the same Italian school with that of the greatest of his predecessors—of Spenser and of Shakspeare, if not also of Chaucer. But, as of these others, so it is true of him, that the inspiration of his Italian models is most perceptible in his earlier and minor verses, and that in his more mature and higher efforts he enriched this original basis of his poetic manner with so much of a different character, partly derived from other foreign sources, partly peculiar to himself, that the mode of conception and expression which he ultimately thus worked out is most correctly described by calling it his own. Conversant as he was with the language and literature of Italy, his poetry probably acquired what it has of Italian in its character principally through the medium of the elder poets of his own country ; and it is, accordingly, still more English than Italian. Much of its inner spirit, and something also of its outward fashion, is of Hebrew derivation : we should say that from the fountain of no other foreign literature did Milton drink with so much eagerness as from this, and by no other was his genius so much nourished and strengthened. Not a little, also, one so accomplished in the lore of classic antiquity must needs have acquired from that source ; the tones of the poetry of Greece and Rome are heard more or less audibly everywhere in that of the great epic poet of England. But in what he has actually achieved the modern writer rises high “above all Greek, above all Roman fame.” Nothing in the poetry of the ancient world approaches the richness and beauty, still less the sublimity, of the most triumphant passages in *Paradise Lost*. The First Book of that poem is probably the most splendid and perfect of human compositions—the

one, that is to say, which unites these two qualities in the highest degree ; and the Fourth is as unsurpassed for grace and luxuriance as that is for magnificence of imagination. And, though these are perhaps the two greatest books in the poem, taken each as a whole, there are passages in every one of the other books equal or almost equal to the finest in these. And worthy of the thoughts that breathe are the words that burn. A tide of gorgeous eloquence rolls on from beginning to end, like a river of molten gold ; outblazing, it may be safely affirmed, everything of the kind in any other poetry. Finally, Milton's blank verse, both for its rich and varied music and its exquisite adaptation, would in itself almost deserve to be styled poetry, without the words ; alone of all our poets, before or since, he has brought out the full capabilities of the language in that form of composition. Indeed, out of the drama, he is still our only great blank verse writer. Compared to his, the blank verse of no other of our narrative or didactic poets, unless we are to except a few of the happiest attempts at the direct imitation of his pauses and cadences, reads like anything else than a sort of muffled rhyme—rhyme spoilt by the ends being blunted or broken off. Who remembers, who can repeat, any narrative blank verse but his ? In whose ear does any other linger ? What other has the true organ tone which makes the music of this form of verse—either the grandeur or the sweetness ?

## COWLEY.

The poetry of Milton, though principally produced after the Restoration, belongs in everything but in date to the preceding age ; and this is also nearly as true of

that of Cowley. Abraham Cowley, born in London in 1618, published his first volume of verse, under the title of 'Poetic Blossoms,' in 1633, when he was yet only a boy of fifteen: one piece contained in this publication, indeed—'The Tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe'—was written when he was only in his tenth year. The four books of his unfinished epic entitled 'Davideis' were mostly written while he was a student at Trinity College, Cambridge. His pastoral drama of Love's Riddle, and his Latin comedy called *Naufragium Joculare*, were both published in 1638. In 1647 appeared his collection of amatory poems entitled 'The Mistress,' and in 1653 his comedy of 'The Guardian,' afterwards altered, and republished as 'The Cutter of Coleman Street.' After the Restoration he collected such of his pieces as he thought worth preserving, and republished them, together with some additional productions, of which the most important were his 'Davideis,' already mentioned, and his 'Pindarique Odes.'

Few poets have been more popular, or more praised, in their own time than Cowley. Milton is said to have declared that the three greatest English poets were Spenser, Shakspeare, and Cowley; though it does not follow that he held all three to be equally great. Sir John Denham, in some verses on Cowley's 'Death and Burial amongst the Ancient Poets' in Westminster Abbey, sets him above all the English poets that had gone before him, and prophesies that posterity will hold him to have been equalled by Virgil alone among those of antiquity. For a long time, too, his works appear to have been more generally read than those of any other English poet, if a judgment may be formed from the frequency with which

they were reprinted, and the numerous copies of them in various forms that still exist.\* This popular favour they seem to have shared with those of Donne, whose legitimate successor Cowley was considered; or rather, when the poetry of Donne became obsolete or unfashionable, that of Cowley took its place in the reading and admiration of the poetical part of the public. Cowley, indeed, is in the main a mere modernization and dilution of Donne. With the same general characteristics of manner, he is somewhat less forced and fantastical, a good deal less daring in every way, but unfortunately also infinitely less poetical. Everything about him, in short, is less deep, and strong, and genuine. His imagination is tinsel, or mere surface gilding, compared to Donne's solid gold; his wit little better than word-catching, to the profound meditative quaintness of the elder poet; and of passion, with which all Donne's finest lines are tremulous, Cowley has none. Considerable grace and dignity occasionally distinguish his Pindaric Odes (which, however, are Pindaric only in name); and he has shown much elegant playfulness of style and fancy in his translations from and imitations of Anacreon, and in some other verses written in the same manner. As for what he intends for love verses, some of them are pretty enough frost-work; but the only sort of love there is in them is the love of point and sparkle.

#### BUTLER.

This manner of writing is more fitly applied by another celebrated poet of the same date, Samuel Butler,

\* A twelfth edition of the collection formed by Cowley himself was published by Tonson in 1721.

the immortal author of *Hudibras*. Butler, born in 1612, is said to have written most of his great poem during the interregnum ; but the first part of it was not published till 1663. The poetry of Butler has been very happily designated as merely the comedy of that style of composition which Donne and Cowley practised in its more serious form—the difference between the two modes of writing being much the same with that which is presented by a countenance of a peculiar cast of features when solemnised by deep reflection, and the same countenance when lighted up by cheerfulness or distorted by mirth.\* And it may be added, that the gayer and more animated expression is here, upon the whole, the more natural and attractive. The quantity of explosive matter of all kinds which Butler has contrived to pack up in his verses is amazing ; it is crack upon crack, flash upon flash, from the first line of his long poem to the last. Much of this incessant bedazzlement is, of course, merely verbal, or otherwise of the humblest species of wit ; but an infinite number of the happiest things is also thrown out. And *Hudibras* is far from being all mere broad farce. Butler's power of arguing in verse, in his own way, may almost be put on a par with Dryden's in his ; and, perseveringly as he devotes himself upon system to the exhibition of the ludicrous and grotesque, he sometimes surprises us with a sudden gleam of the truest beauty of thought and expression breaking out from the midst of the usual rattling fire of smartnesses and conundrums—as when in one place he exclaims of a thin cloud drawn over the moon—

Mysterious veil ; of brightness made,  
At once her lustre and her shade !

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\* Scott, in *Life of Dryden*.

## WALLER.

The most celebrated among the minor poets of the period between the Restoration and the Revolution was Waller. Edmund Waller, born in 1605, had, as already noticed, announced himself as a writer of verse before the close of the reign of James I., by his lines on the escape of Prince Charles at the port of San Andero, in the Bay of Biscay, on his return from Spain, in September, 1623 ; and he continued to write till after the accession of James II., in whose reign he died, in the year 1687. His last production was the little poem concluding with one of his happiest, one of his most characteristic, and one of his best-known passages :— •

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,  
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made :  
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become  
As they draw near to their eternal home :  
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,  
That stand upon the threshold of the new.

Fenton, his editor, tells us that a number of poems on religious subjects, to which these verses refer, were mostly written when he was about eighty years old ; and he has himself intimated that his bodily faculties were now almost gone :—

When we for age could neither read nor write,  
The subject made us able to indite.

Waller, therefore, as well as Milton, Cowley, and Butler, may be considered to have formed his manner in the last age ; but his poetry does not belong to the old English school even so much as that of either Butler or Cowley.

The contemporaries of the earlier portion of his long career were Carew and Lovelace ; and with them he is properly to be classed in respect of poetical style and manner. Both Lovelace and Carew, however, as has been already intimated, have more passion than Waller, who, with all his taste and elegance, was incapable of either expressing or feeling anything very lofty or generous—being, in truth, poet as he was, a very mean-souled description of person, as his despicable political course sufficiently evinced.\* His poetry accordingly is beyond the reach of critical animadversion on the score of such extravagance as is sometimes prompted by strong emotion. Waller is always perfectly master of himself, and idolizes his mistress with quite as much coolness and self-possession as he flatters his prince. But, although cold and unaffected at all times, he occasionally rises to much dignity of thought and manner. His panegyric on Crom-

\* The story of what was called Waller's plot, which exploded in May 1643, is well known. Some of those concerned were executed, and others were punished by long imprisonments ; but Waller, who appears to have been the most guilty, is understood to have made his peace by the reckless frankness of his confessions, and was let off with a fine and a licence "to go travel abroad." He left the country accordingly, "and, travelling into France," says Kennet, "improved himself in good letters ; and for the rest of his life, which was very long, he chose rather to be admired for a poet than to be envied for a politician." They print among his works some of his speeches in parliament—among the rest his address on Tuesday, July 4th, 1643, when he "was brought to the bar, and had leave given him by the Speaker to say what he could for himself before they proceeded to expel him the House," which is throughout one of the most abject prostrations ever made by anything in the shape of a man.

well, the offering of his gratitude to the Protector for the permission granted to him of returning to England, after ten years' exile, is one of the most graceful pieces of adulation ever offered by poetry to power; and the poet is here probably more sincere than in most of his effusions, for the occasion was one on which he was likely to be moved to more than usual earnestness of feeling. A few years after he welcomed Charles II. on his restoration to the throne of his ancestors in another poem, which has been generally considered a much less spirited composition: Fenton accounts for the falling off by the author's advance in the meanwhile from his forty-ninth to his fifty-fifth year—"from which time," he observes, "his genius began to decline apace from its meridian;" but the poet himself assigned another reason:—when Charles frankly told him that he thought his own panegyric much inferior to Cromwell's, "Sir," replied Waller, "we poets never succeed so well in writing truth as in fiction." Perhaps the true reason, after all, might be that his majesty's return to England was not quite so exciting a subject to Mr. Waller's muse as his own return had been. One thing must be admitted in regard to Waller's poetry; it is free from all mere verbiage and empty sound; if he rarely or never strikes a very powerful note, there is at least always something for the fancy or the understanding, as well as for the ear, in what he writes. He abounds also in ingenious thoughts, which he dresses to the best advantage, and exhibits with great transparency of style. Eminent, however, as he is in his class, he must be reckoned among that subordinate class of poets who think and express themselves chiefly in similitudes, not among those who conceive and

write passionately and metaphorically. He had a decorative and illuminating, but not a transforming imagination.

## MARVEL.

The chief writer of verse on the popular side after the Restoration was Andrew Marvel, the noble-minded member for Hull, the friend of Milton, and, in that age of brilliant profligacy, renowned alike as the first of patriots and of wits. Marvel, the son of the Rev. Andrew Marvel, master of the grammar school of Hull, was born there in 1620, and died in 1678. His poetical genius has scarcely had justice done to it. He is the author of a number of satires in verse, in which a rich vein of vigorous, though often coarse, humour runs through a careless, extemporaneous style, and which did prodigious execution in the party warfare of the day ; but some of his other poetry, mostly perhaps written in the earlier part of his life, is eminent both for the delicate bloom of the sentiment and for grace of form. His *Song of the Exiles*, beginning “Where the remote Bermudas ride,” is a gem of melody, picturesqueness, and sentiment, nearly without a flaw, and is familiar to every lover of poetry. Not of such purity of execution throughout are the lines entitled ‘To his Coy Mistress,’ but still there are few short poems in the language so remarkable for the union of grace and force, and the easy and flowing transition from a light and playful tone to solemnity, passion, and grandeur. How elegant, and even deferential, is the gay extravagance of the commencement :—

Had we but world enough and time,  
This coyness, lady, were no crime.

We would sit down, and think which way  
 To walk, and pass our long love's day.  
 Thou by the Indian Ganges' side  
 Should'st rubies find : I by the tide  
 Of Humber would complain. I would  
 Love you ten years before the flood ;  
 And you should, if you please, refuse  
 Till the conversion of the Jews.  
 My vegetable love should grow  
 Vaster than empires, and more slow.  
 An hundred years should go to praise  
 Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze ;  
 Two hundred to adore each breast ;  
 But thirty thousand to the rest :  
 An age at least to every part ;  
 And the last age should show your heart.  
 For, lady, you deserve this state ;  
 Nor would I love at lower rate.

And then how skilfully managed is the rise from this badinage of courtesy and compliment to the strain almost of the ode or the hymn ; and how harmonious, notwithstanding its suddenness, is the contrast between the sparkling levity of the prelude and the solemn pathos that follows :—

But at my back I always hear  
 Time's winged chariot hurrying near ;  
 And yonder all before us lie  
 Deserts of vast eternity.  
 Thy beauty shall no more be found ;  
 Nor in thy marble vault shall sound  
 My echoing song. . . . .

Till, at the end, the pent-up accumulation of passion bursts its floodgates in the noble lines :—

Let us roll all our strength, and all  
 Our sweetness, up into one ball ;  
 And tear our pleasures with rough strife  
 Thorough the iron gates of life.

The following verses, which are less known, are exquisitely elegant and tuneful. They are entitled 'The Picture of T. C. in a Prospect of Flowers :—

See with what simplicity  
 This nymph begins her golden days !  
 In the green grass she loves to lie,  
 And there with her fair aspect tames  
 The wilder flowers, and gives them names ;  
 But only with the roses plays,  
 And them does tell  
 What colour best becomes them, and what smell.

Who can foretell for what high cause  
 This darling of the gods was born ?  
 See this is she whose chaster laws  
 The wanton Love shall one day fear,  
 And, under her command severe,  
 See his bow broke and ensigns torn.  
 Happy who can  
 Appease this virtuous enemy of man !

O then let me in time compound,  
 And parley with those conquering eyes ;  
 Ere they have tried their force to wound,  
 Ere with their glancing wheels they drive  
 In triumph over hearts that strive,  
 And them that yield but more despise.  
 Let me be laid  
 Where I may see the glory from some shade.

Meantime, whilst every verdant thing  
 Itself does at thy beauty charm,  
 Reform the errors of the spring :  
 Make that the tulips may have share  
 Of sweetness, seeing they are fair ;  
 And roses of their thorns disarm :  
 But most procure  
 Thy violets may a longer age endure.

But oh, young beauty of the woods,  
 Whom nature courts with fruits and flowers,

Gather the flowers, but spare the buds ; \*  
 Lest Flora, angry at thy crime  
 To kill her infants in their prime,  
 Should quickly make the example yours ;  
 And, ere we see,  
 Nip in the blossom all our hopes in thee.

Certainly neither Carew, nor Waller, nor any other court poet of that day, has produced anything in the same style finer than these lines. But Marvel's more elaborate poetry is not confined to love songs and other such light exercises of an ingenious and elegant fancy. Witness his verses on Milton's *Paradise Lost*—“When I behold the poet blind, yet bold”—which have throughout almost the dignity, and in parts more than the strength, of Waller. But, instead of transcribing these, which are printed in most editions of Milton, we will give as a specimen of his more serious vein a portion of his longer poem on the Death of the Lord Protector :—

That Providence, which had so long the care  
 Of Cromwell's head, and numbered every hair,  
 Now in itself, the glass where all appears,  
 Had seen the period of his golden years ;  
 And thenceforth only did intend to trace  
 What death might least so fair a life deface.

To love and grief the fatal writ was signed  
 (Those nobler weaknesses of human kind,  
 From which those powers that issued the decree,  
 Although immortal, found they were not free) ;

\* This may remind the reader of Wordsworth of that poet's

“Here are Daisies, take your fill ;  
 Pansies, and the Cuckow-flower :  
 Of the lofty Daffodil  
 Make your bed, and make your bower ;  
 Fill your lap, and fill your bosom ;  
 Only spare the Strawberry-blossom.”

That they, to whom his breast still open lies  
 In gentle passions, should his death disguise,  
 And leave succeeding ages cause to mourn  
 As long as grief shall weep, or love shall mourn.

Straight does a slow and languishing disease  
 Eliza,\* nature's and his darling, seize.

Like polished mirrors, so his steely breast  
 Had every figure of her woes expressed;  
 And, with the damp of her last gasps obscured,  
 Had drawn such stains as were not to be cured.  
 Fate could not either reach with single stroke,  
 But, the dear image fled, the mirror broke.

He without noise still travelled to his end,  
 As silent suns to meet the night descend :  
 The stars, that for him fought, had only power  
 Left to determine now his fatal hour ;  
 Which since they might not hinder, yet they cast  
 To choose it worthy of his glories past.  
 No part of time but bare his mark away  
 Of honour ; all the year was Cromwell's day ;  
 But this, of all the most auspicious found,  
 Twice had in open field him victor crowned ;  
 When up the armed mountains of Dunbar  
 He marched, and through deep Severn, ending war.  
 What day should him eternize, but the same  
 That had before immortalized his name ?  
 That so, whoe'er would at his death have joyed  
 In their own griefs might find themselves employed.  
 But those that sadly his departure grieved  
 Yet joyed, remembering what he once achieved ;  
 And the last minute his victorious ghost  
 Gave chase to Ligny on the Belgic coast.  
 Here ended all his mortal toils ; he laid,†  
 And slept in peace under the laurel shade.

\* That is, Cromwell's second and favourite daughter, Elizabeth, the wife of John Claypole, Esq., who died about a month before her father.

† This form was not the vulgarism in the seventeenth century that it is now. It is frequent in Marvel and several of his contemporaries.

O Cromwell ! heaven's favourite, to none  
 Have such high honours from above been shown ;  
 For whom the elements we mourners see,  
 And heaven itself would the great herald be ;  
 Which with more care set forth his obsequies  
 Than those of Moses, hid from human eyes ;  
 As jealous only here, lest all be less  
 Than we could to his memory express.

Since him away the dismal tempest rent,  
 Who once more joined us to the continent ;  
 Who planted England on the Flandric shore,  
 And stretched our frontier to the Indian ore ;  
 Whose greater truths obscure the fables old,  
 Whether of British saints or worthies told ;  
 And, in a valour lessening Arthur's deeds,  
 For holiness the Confessor exceeds.

He first put arms into religion's hand,  
 And, timorous conscience unto courage manned,  
 The soldier taught that inward mail to wear,  
 And, fearing God, how they should nothing fear :\*  
 Those strokes, he said, will strike through all below,  
 Where those that strike from heaven fetch their blow.  
 Astonished armies did their flight prepare,  
 And cities strong were stormed by his prayer :  
 Of that for ever Preston's field shall tell  
 The story, and impregnable Clonmell.

Valour, religion, friendship, prudence, died  
 At once with him, and all that's good beside ;  
 And we, death's refuse, nature's dregs, confined  
 To loathsome life, alas ! are left behind :  
 Where we (so once we used) shall now no more  
 To fetch day, press about his chamber door ;

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\* Is this, then, the true origin of Cowper's verse—  
 “Who fears his God, and knows no other fear”?

Racine's ‘Athalie,’ in which occurs the famous line—  
 “Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre craint”—  
 was not written till many years after Marvel's poem.

From which he issued with that awful state,  
 It seemed Mars broke through Janus' double gate ;  
 Yet always tempered with an air so mild,  
 No April suns that e'er so gently smiled :  
 No more shall hear that powerful language charm,  
 Whose force oft spared the labour of his arm :  
 No more shall follow where he spent the days  
 In war, in counsel, or in prayer and praise ;  
 Whose meanest acts he would himself advance,  
 As ungirt David to the ark did dance.  
 All, all is gone of ours or his delight  
 In horses fierce, wild deer, or armour bright :  
 Francisca fair can nothing now but weep,  
 Nor with soft notes shall sing his cares asleep.

I saw him dead : a leaden slumber lies,  
 And mortal sleep, over those wakeful eyes :  
 Those gentle rays under the lids were fled,  
 Which through his looks that piercing sweetness shed ;  
 That port, which so majestic was and strong,  
 Loose and deprived of vigour stretched along ;  
 All withered, all discoloured, pale, and wan ;  
 How much another thing ! no more that man !  
 Oh human glory ! vain ! oh death ! oh wings !  
 Oh worthless world ! oh transitory things !  
 Yet dwelt that greatness in his shape decayed  
 That still, though dead, greater than death he laid,  
 And in his altered face you something feign  
 That threatens death he yet will live again.  
 Not much unlike the sacred oak which shoots  
 To heaven its branches, and through earth its roots ;  
 Whose spacious boughs are hung with trophies round,  
 And honoured wreaths have oft the victor crowned ;  
 When angry Jove darts lightning through the air  
 At mortals' sins, nor his own plant will spare,  
 It groans, and bruises all below, that stood  
 So many years the shelter of the wood ;  
 The tree, ere while fore-shortened to our view,  
 When fallen shows taller yet than as it grew :  
 So shall his praise to after times increase,  
 When truth shall be allowed and faction cease.

Thee many ages hence in martial verse  
 Shall the English soldier, ere he charge, rehearse ;

Singing of thee, inflame themselves to fight,  
 And with the name of Cromwell armies fright.  
 As long as rivers to the seas shall run,  
 As long as Cynthia shall relieve the sun ;  
 While stags shall fly unto the forests thick,  
 While sheep delight the grassy downs to pick ;  
 As long as future time succeeds the past,  
 Always thy honour, praise, and name shall last.

This poem was written very soon after Cromwell's death, in the brief reign of Richard, and most probably at its commencement ; for all good and high things are anticipated of that worthy successor of his great father. "He, as his father," we are told,—

— long was kept from sight  
 In private, to be viewed by better light ;  
 But, opened once, what splendour does he throw !  
 A Cromwell in an hour a prince will grow.  
 How he becomes that seal ! how strongly strains,  
 How gently winds at once, the ruling reins !

We must add a sample or two of Marvel's more reckless verse—that rough and ready satire in which he was unmatched in the latter part of his life. It is impossible to present any of his effusions in this line without curtailment ; and the portions of the humour that must be abstracted are frequently the most pungent of the whole ; but the following lines, entitled 'Royal Resolutions,' may, even with the necessary omissions, convey some notion of the wit and drollery with which Marvel used to turn the court and government into ridicule :—

When plate was at pawn, and fob at an ebb,  
 And spider might weave in bowels its web,  
 And stomach as empty as brain ;  
 Then Charles without acre  
 Did swear by his Maker,  
 If e'er I see England again,

I'll have a religion all of my own,  
 Whether Popish or Protestant shall not be known,  
 And, if it prove troublesome, I will have none.

I'll have a long parliament always to friend,  
 And furnish my treasure as fast as I spend ;  
 And, if they will not, they shall have an end.

I'll have a council that sit always still,  
 And give me a licence to do what I will ;  
 And two secretaries . . . . .

My insolent brother shall bear all the sway :  
 If parliaments murmur, I'll send him away,  
 And call him again as soon as I may.

I'll have a rare son, in marrying though marred,  
 Shall govern, if not my kingdom, my guard,  
 And shall be successor to me or Gerrard.

I'll have a new London instead of the old,  
 With wide streets and uniform to my own mould ;  
 But, if they build too fast, I'll bid 'em hold.

The ancient nobility I will lay by,  
 And new ones create, their rooms to supply ;  
 And they shall raise fortunes for my own fry.

Some one I'll advance from a common descent  
 So high that he shall hector the parliament,  
 And all wholesome laws for the public prevent.

And I will assert him to such a degree,  
 That all his foul treasons, though daring and high,  
 Under my hand and seal shall have indemnity.

I'll wholly abandon all public affairs,  
 And pass all my time with buffoons and players,  
 And saunter to Nelly when I should be at prayers.

I'll have a fine pond with a pretty decoy,  
 Where many strange fowl shall feed and enjoy,  
 And still, in their language, quack Vive le Roy.

To this we will add part of a 'Ballad on the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen presenting the King and

the Duke of York each with a copy of his freedom,  
A.D. 1674:—

The Londoners Gent  
To the King do present  
In a box the city maggot:  
'Tis a thing full of weight  
That requires all the might  
Of whole Guildhall team to drag it.

Whilst their churches are unbuilt,  
And their houses undwelt,  
And their orphans want bread to feed 'em,  
Themselves they've bereft  
Of the little wealth they'd left,  
To make an offering of their freedom.

O, ye addlebrained cits !  
Who henceforth, in their wits,  
Would trust their youth to your heeding ?  
When in diamonds and gold  
Ye have *him* thus enrolled ?  
Ye knew both his friends and his breeding !

Beyond sea he began,  
Where such a riot he ran  
That every one there did leave him ;  
And now he's come o'er  
Ten times worse than before,  
When none but such fools would receive him.

He ne'er knew, not he,  
How to serve or be free,  
Though he has passed through so many adventures ;  
But e'er since he was bound  
(That is, since he was crowned)  
He has every day broke his indentures.

• • • • •  
Throughout Lombard Street,  
Each man he did meet  
He would run on the score with and borrow :  
When they asked for their own  
He was broke and was gone,  
And his creditors all left to sorrow.

Though oft bound to the peace,  
 Yet he never would cease  
 To vex his poor neighbours with quarrels ;  
 And, when he was beat,  
 He still made his retreat  
 To his Clevelands, his Nells, and his Carwells.

• • • • •  
 His word or his oath  
 Cannot bind him to troth,  
 And he values not credit or history ;  
 And, though he has served through  
 Two prenticeships now,  
 He knows not his trade nor his mystery.

Then, London, rejoice  
 In thy fortunate choice,  
 To have him made free of thy spices ;  
 And do not mistrust  
 He may once grow more just  
 When he's worn off his follies and vices.

And what little thing  
 Is that which you bring  
 To the Duke, the kingdom's darling ?  
 Ye hug it, and draw  
 Like ants at a straw,  
 Though too small for the gristle of starling.

Is it a box of pills  
 To cure the Duke's ills ?  
 He is too far gone to begin it !  
 Or does your fine show  
 In processioning go,  
 With the pix, and the host within it ?

The very first head  
 Of the oath you have read  
 Shows you all how fit he 's to govern,  
 When in heart you all knew  
 He ne'er was nor will be true  
 To his country or to his sovereign.

• • • • •  
 And now, worshipful sirs,  
 Go fold up your furs,

And Viners turn again, turn again :  
I see, whoe'er's freed,  
You for slaves are decreed,  
Until you burn again, burn again.

A hot pulse of scorn and indignant feeling often beats under Marvell's raillery, as may be perceived from these verses ; and the generality of his pasquinades are much more caustic and scourging, as well as in every way more daring and unscrupulous.

#### OTHER MINOR POETS.

Of the other minor poets of this date we can only mention the names of a few of the most distinguished. Sir Charles Sedley is the Suckling of the time of Charles II., with less impulsiveness and more insinuation, but a kindred gaiety and sprightliness of fancy, and an answering liveliness and at the same time courtly ease and elegance of diction. King Charles, a good judge of such matters, was accustomed to say that Sedley's style, either in writing or discourse, would be the standard of the English tongue ; and his contemporary, the Duke of Buckingham (Villiers), used to call his exquisite art of expression *Sedley's Witchcraft*. Sedley's genius early ripened and bore fruit : he was born only two or three years before the breaking out of the Civil War ; and he was in high reputation as a poet and a wit within six or seven years after the Restoration. He survived both the Revolution and the century, dying in the year 1701. Sedley's fellow debauchee, the celebrated Earl of Rochester (Wilmot)—although the brutal grossness of the greater part of his verse has deservedly made it and its author infamous—was perhaps a still greater genius.

There is immense strength and pregnancy of expression in some of the best of his compositions, careless and unfinished as they are. Rochester had not completed his thirty-third year when he died, in July 1680. Of the poetical productions of the other court wits of Charles's reign the principal are, the Duke of Buckingham's satirical comedy of *The Rehearsal*, which was very effective when first produced, and still enjoys a great reputation, though it would probably be thought but a heavy joke now by most readers not carried away by the prejudice in its favour; the Earl of Roscommon's very common-place *Essay on Translated Verse*; and the Earl of Dorset's lively and well-known song, "To all you ladies now on land," written at sea the night before the engagement with the Dutch on the 3rd of June, 1665, or rather professing to have been then written, for the asserted poetic tranquillity of the noble author in expectation of the morrow's fight has been disputed. The Marquis of Halifax and Lord Godolphin were also writers of verse at this date; but neither of them has left anything worth remembering. Among the minor poets of the time, however, we ought not to forget Charles Cotton, best known for his humorous, though somewhat coarse, travesties of Virgil and Lucian, and for his continuation of Izaak Walton's *Treatise on Angling*, and his fine idiomatic translation of Montaigne's *Essays*, but also the author of some short original pieces in verse, of much fancy and liveliness. One entitled an 'Ode to Winter,' in particular, has been highly praised by Wordsworth.\* We need scarcely mention Sir William Davenant's long and languid heroic poem of *Gondibert*, though Hobbes,

\* See Preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, 1815.

equally eminent in poetry and the mathematics, has declared that he “never yet saw poem that had so much shape of art, health of morality, and vigour and beauty of expression ;” and has prophesied that, were it not for the mutability of modern tongues, “it would last as long as either the *Aeneid* or *Iliad*.<sup>\*</sup> The English of the reign of Charles II. is not yet obsolete, nor likely to become so ; Homer and Virgil are also still read and admired ; but men have forgotten Gondibert, almost as much as they have Hobbes’s own *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

#### DRYDEN.

By far the most illustrious name among the English poets of the latter half of the seventeenth century—if we exclude Milton as belonging properly to the preceding age—is that of John Dryden. Born in 1632, Dryden produced his first known composition in verse in 1649, his lines on the death of Lord Hastings, a young nobleman of great promise, who was suddenly cut off by small-pox, on the eve of his intended marriage, in that year. This earliest of Dryden’s poems is in the most ambitious style of the school of Donne and Cowley : Donne himself, indeed, has scarcely penned anything quite so extravagant as one passage, in which the fancy of the young poet runs riot among the phenomena of the loathsome disease to which Lord Hastings had fallen a victim :—

So many spots, like naeves on Venus’ soil,  
One jewel set off with so many a foil :  
Blisters with pride swell’d, which through’s flesh did  
sprout  
Like rose-buds stuck i’ the lily skin about.

---

\* Answer to Davenant’s Preface to *Gondibert*.

Each little pimple had a tear in it,  
To wail the fault its rising did commit:—

and so forth. Almost the only feature of the future Dryden which this production discloses is his deficiency in sensibility or heart; exciting as the occasion was, it does not contain an affecting line. Perhaps, on comparing his imitation with Donne's own poetry, so instinct with tenderness and passion, Dryden may have seen or felt that his own wanted the very quality which was the light and life of that of his master; at any rate, wiser than Cowley, who had the same reason for shunning a competition with Donne, he abandoned this style with his first attempt, and, indeed, for anything that appears, gave up the writing of poetry for some years altogether. His next verses of any consequence are dated nine years later,—his 'Heroic Stanzas on the Death of Oliver Cromwell,'—and, destitute as they are of the vigorous conception and full and easy flow of versification which he afterwards attained, they are free from any trace of the elaborate and grotesque absurdity of the Elegy on Lord Hastings. His *Astrea Redux*, or poem on the return of the king, produced two years after, evinces a growing freedom and command of style. But it is in his *Annus Mirabilis*, written in 1666, that his genius breaks forth for the first time with any promise of that full effulgence at which it ultimately arrived; here, in spite of the incumbrance of a stanza (the quatrain of alternately rhyming heroics) which he afterwards wisely exchanged for a more manageable kind of verse, we have much both of the nervous diction and the fervid fancy which characterise his latest and best works. From this date to the end of his days, Dryden's life was one long literary

labour ; eight original poems of considerable length, many shorter pieces, twenty-eight dramas, and several volumes of poetical translation from Chaucer, Boccaccio, Ovid, Theocritus, Lucretius, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, and Virgil, together with numerous discourses in prose, some of them very long and elaborate, attest the industry as well as the fertility of a mind which so much toil and so many draughts upon its resources were so far from exhausting, that its powers continued not only to exert themselves with unimpaired elasticity, but to grow stronger and brighter to the last. The genius of Dryden certainly did not, as that of Waller is said to have done, begin "to decline apace from its meridian" after he had reached his fifty-fifth year. His famous *Alexander's Feast* and his *Fables*, his greatest poems, were the last he produced, and were published together in the year 1700, only a few months before his death, at the age of sixty-nine.

Dryden has commonly been considered to have founded a new school of English poetry ; but perhaps it would be more strictly correct to regard him as having only carried to higher perfection—perhaps to the highest to which it has yet been brought—a style of poetry which had been cultivated long before his day. The satires of Hall and of Marston, and also the *Nosce Teipsum* of Sir John Davies, all published before the end of the sixteenth century, not to refer to other less eminent examples, may be classed as of the same school with his poetry. It is a school very distinguishable from that to which Milton and the greatest of our elder poets belong, deriving its spirit and character, as it does, chiefly from the ancient Roman classic poetry, whereas the other is

mainly the offspring of the middle ages, of Gothic manners and feelings and the Romance or Provençal literature. The one therefore may be called, with sufficient propriety, the classic, the other the romantic school of poetry. But it seems to be a mistake to assume that the former first arose in England after the Restoration, under the influence of the imitation of the French, which then became fashionable ; the most that can be said is, that the French taste which then became prevalent among us may have encouraged its revival, for undoubtedly what has been called the classic school of poetry had been cultivated by English writers at a much earlier date ; nor is there any reason to suppose that the example of the modern poetry of France had any share in originally turning our own into that channel. Marston and Hall, and Sackville in his *Ferrex and Porrex*, and Ben Jonson in his comedies and tragedies, and the other early writers of English poetry in the classic vein, appear not to have imitated any French poets, but to have gone to the fountain-head, and sought in the productions of the Roman poets themselves, — in the plays of Terence and Seneca, and the satires of Juvenal and Persius, — for examples and models. Nay, even Dryden, at a later period, probably formed himself almost exclusively upon the same originals and upon the works of these his predecessors among his own countrymen, and was little, if at all, indebted to or influenced by any French pattern. His poetry, unlike as it is to that of Milton or Spenser, has still a thoroughly English character — an English force and heartiness, and, with all its classicality, not a little even of the freedom and luxuriance of the more genuine English style. Smooth

Waller, who preceded him, may have learned something from the modern French poets ; and so may Pope, who came after him ; but Dryden's fiery energy and “full-resounding line” have nothing in common with them in spirit or manner. Without either creative imagination or any power of pathos, he is in argument, in satire, and in declamatory magnificence, the greatest of our poets. His poetry, indeed, is not the highest kind of poetry, but in that kind he stands unrivalled and unapproached. Pope, his great disciple, who, in correctness, in neatness, and in the brilliancy of epigrammatic point, has outshone his master, has not come near him in easy flexible vigour, in indignant vehemence, in narrative rapidity, any more than he has in sweep and variety of versification. Dryden never writes coldly, or timidly, or drowsily. The movement of verse always sets him on fire, and whatever he produces is a coinage hot from the brain, not slowly scraped or pinched into shape, but struck out as from a die with a few stout blows or a single wrench of the screw. It is this fervour especially which gives to his personal sketches their wonderful life and force : his Absalom and Achitophel is the noblest portrait-gallery in poetry.

It is chiefly as a dramatic writer that Dryden can be charged with the imitation of French models. Of his plays, nearly thirty in number, the comedies for the most part in prose, the tragedies in rhyme, few have much merit considered as entire works, although there are brilliant passages and spirited scenes in most of them. Of the whole number, he has told us that his tragedy of *All for Love, or the World well Lost* (founded on the story of *Antony and Cleopatra*), was the only play he wrote

for himself; the rest, he admits, were sacrifices to the vitiated taste of the age. His *Almanzor*, or the Conquest of Granada (in two parts), although extravagant, is also full of genius. Of his comedies, the *Spanish Friar* is perhaps the best; it has some most effective scenes.

## DRAMATISTS.

Many others of the poets of this age whose names have been already noticed were also dramatists. Milton's *Comus* was never acted publicly, nor his *Samson Agonistes* at all. Cowley's *Love's Riddle* and *Cutter of Coleman-street* were neither of them originally written for the stage; but the latter was brought out in one of the London theatres after the Restoration, and was also revived about the middle of the last century. Waller altered the fifth act of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Maid's Tragedy*, making his additions to the blank verse of the old dramatists in rhyme, as he states in a prologue:—

In this old play what's new we have express'd  
 In rhyming verse distinguish'd from the rest;  
 That, as the Rhene its hasty way does make  
 (Not mingling waters) through Geneva's lake,  
 So, having here the different styles in view,  
 You may compare the former with the new.

Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, besides his *Rehearsal*, wrote a farce entitled the *Battle of Sedgmoor*, and also altered Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of *The Chances*. The tragedy of *Valentinian* of the same writers was altered by the Earl of Rochester. Sedley wrote three comedies, mostly in prose, and three tragedies, one in

rhyme and two in blank verse. And Davenant is the author of twenty-five tragedies, comedies, and masques, produced between 1629 and his death, in 1668. But the most eminent dramatic names of this era are those of Thomas Otway, Nathaniel Lee, John Crowne, Sir George Etheridge, William Wycherly, and Thomas Southerne. Of six tragedies and four comedies written by Otway, his tragedies of the *Orphan* and *Venice Preserved* still sustain his fame and popularity as the most pathetic and tear-drawing of all our dramatists. Their licentiousness has necessarily banished his comedies from the stage, with most of those of his contemporaries. Lee has also great tenderness, with much more fire and imagination than Otway ; of his pieces, eleven in number, —all tragedies,—his *Theodosius, or the Force of Love*, and his *Rival Queens, or Alexander the Great*, are the most celebrated. Crowne, though several of his plays were highly successful when first produced, was almost forgotten, till Mr. Lamb reprinted some of his scenes in his *Dramatic Specimens*, and showed that no dramatist of that age had written finer things. Of seventeen pieces produced by Crowne between 1671 and 1698, his tragedy of *Thyestes* and his comedy of *Sir Courtley Nice* are in particular of eminent merit, the first for its poetry, the second for plot and character. Etheridge is the author of only three comedies, the *Comical Revenge* (1664), *She Would if She Could* (1668), and the *Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter* (1676) ; all remarkable for the polish and fluency of the dialogue, and entitled to be regarded as having first set the example of that modern style of comedy which was afterwards cultivated by Wycherly, Farquhar, Vanbrugh, and Congreve.

Wycherly, who was born in 1640, and lived till 1715, produced his only four plays, *Love in a Wood*, *The Gentleman Dancing Master*, *The Country Wife*, and *The Plain Dealer*, all comedies, between the years 1672 and 1677. The two last of these pieces are written with more elaboration than anything of Etheridge's, and both contain some bold delineation of character and strong satiric writing, reminding us at times of Ben Jonson; but, like him, too, Wycherly is deficient in ease and nature. Southerne, who was only born in the year of the Restoration, and lived till 1746, had produced no more than his two first plays before the close of the present period—his tragedy of the *Loyal Brother* in 1682, and his comedy of the *Disappointment* in 1684. Of ten dramatic pieces of which he is the author, five are comedies, and are of little value; but his tragedies of *The Fatal Marriage* (1692), *Oroonoko* (1696), and the *Spartan Dame* (1719), are interesting and affecting.

It is hardly worth while to mention, under the head of the literature of the age, the seventeen plays of King William's poet laureate, Thomas Shadwell, better remembered by Dryden's immortal nick-name of Mac Flecknoe; or the equally numerous brood of the muse of Elkanah Settle, the city poet, Dryden's

Doeg, whom God for mankind's mirth has made; or the nine of Shadwell's successor in the laureateship, Nahum Tate, the author of the worst alterations of Shakspeare, the worst version of the Psalms of David, and the worst continuation of a great poem (his second part of the *Absalom and Achitophel*) extant; or, lastly, although she had more talent than any of these, the

seventeen pieces of the notorious Mrs. Aphra Behn—Pope's *Astraea*,

Who fairly puts all characters to bed.

This Mrs. Behn, besides her plays, was the authoress of a number of novels and tales, which, amid great impetuosity and turbulence of style, contain some ingeniously contrived incidents and some rather effective painting of the passions.

PROSE-WRITERS—CLARENDON.

Eminent as he is among the poets of his age, Dryden is also one of the greatest of its prose-writers. In ease, flexibility, and variety, indeed, his English prose has scarcely ever been excelled. Cowley, too, is a charming writer of prose: the natural, pure, and flowing eloquence of his Essays is better than anything in his poetry. Waller, Suckling, and Sedley, also wrote all well in prose; and Marvel's literary reputation is founded more upon his prose than upon his verse. Of writers exclusively in prose belonging to the space between the Restoration and the Revolution, Clarendon may be first mentioned, although his great work, his History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars, was not published till the year 1702, nor his Life and Continuation of his History, before 1759. His style cannot be commended for its correctness; the manner in which he constructs his sentences, indeed, often sets at defiance all the rules of syntax; but yet he is never unintelligible or obscure—with such admirable expository skill is the matter arranged and spread out, even where the mere verbal sentence-making is the most negligent and entangled.

The style, in fact, is that proper to speaking rather than to writing, and had, no doubt, been acquired by Clarendon not so much from books as from his practice in speaking at the bar and in parliament; for, with great natural abilities, he does not seem to have had much acquaintance with literature, or much acquired knowledge of any kind resulting from study. But his writing possesses the quality that interests above all the graces or artifices of rhetoric—the impress of a mind informed by its subject, and having a complete mastery over it; while the broad full stream in which it flows makes the reader feel as if he were borne along on its tide. The abundance, in particular, with which he pours out his stores of language and illustration in his characters of the eminent persons engaged on both sides of the great contest, seems inexhaustible. The historical value of his history, however, is not very considerable; it has not preserved very many facts which are not to be found elsewhere; and, whatever may be thought of its general bias, the inaccuracy of its details is so great throughout, as demonstrated by the authentic evidences of the time, that there is scarcely any other contemporary history which is so little trustworthy as an authority with regard to minute particulars. Clarendon, in truth, was far from being placed in the most favourable circumstances for giving a perfectly correct account of many of the events he has undertaken to record: he was not, except for a very short time, in the midst of the busy scene: looking to it, as he did, from a distance, while the mighty drama was still only in progress, he was exposed to some chances of misconception to which even those removed from it by a long interval of time are not liable; and,

without imputing to him any further intention to deceive than is implied in the purpose which we may suppose he chiefly had in view in writing his work, the vindication of his own side of the question, his position as a partisan, intimately mixed up with the affairs and interests of one of the two contending factions, could not fail both to bias his own judgment, and even in some measure to distort or colour the reports made to him by others. On the whole, therefore, this celebrated work is rather a great literary performance than a very valuable historical monument.

#### HOBSES.

Another royalist history of the same times and events to which Clarendon's work is dedicated, the Behemoth of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, introduces one of the most distinguished names both in English literature and in modern metaphysical, ethical, and political philosophy. Hobbes, born in 1588, commenced author in 1628, at the age of forty, by publishing his translation of Thucydides, but did not produce his first original work, his Latin treatise entitled 'De Cive,' till 1642. This was followed by his treatises entitled 'Human Nature' and 'De Corpore Politico,' in 1650; his *Leviathan*, in 1651; his translations in verse of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, in 1675; and his 'Behemoth, or History of the Causes of the Civil Wars of England, and of the counsels and artifices by which they were carried on, from the year 1640 to the year 1660,' a few months after his death, at the age of ninety-two, in 1679. Regarded merely as a writer of English, there can be little difference of opinion about the high rank to be assigned to Hobbes. He has

been described as our first uniformly careful and correct writer ;\* and he may be admitted to have at least set the first conspicuous and influential example, in what may be called our existing English (for Roger Ascham, Sir Thomas Elyot, and one or two other early writers, seem to have aimed at the same thing in a preceding stage of the language), of that regularity of style which has since his time been generally attended to. This, however, is his least merit. No writer has succeeded in making language a more perfect exponent of thought than it is as employed by Hobbes. His style is not poetical or glowingly eloquent, because his mind was not poetical, and the subjects about which he wrote would have rejected the exaggerations of imaginative or passionate expression if he had been capable of supplying such. But in the prime qualities of precision and perspicuity, and also in economy and succinctness, in force and in terseness, it is the very perfection of a merely expository style. Without any affectation of point, also, it often shapes itself easily and naturally into the happiest aphoristic and epigrammatic forms. Hobbes's clearness and aptness of expression, the effect of which is like that of reading a book with a good light, never forsake him—not even in that most singular performance, his version of Homer, where there is scarcely a trace of ability of any other kind. There are said to be only two lines in that work in which he is positively poetical ; those which describe the infant Astyanax in the scene of the parting of Hector and Andromache, in the Sixth Book of the Iliad :—

\* Hallam, in *Lit. of Eur.*

Now Hector met her with her little boy,  
 That in the nurse's arms was carried ;  
*And like a star upon her bosom lay*  
*His beautiful and shining golden head.*

But there are other passages in which by dint of mere directness and transparency of style he has rendered a line or two happily enough—as, for instance, in the description of the descent of Apollo at the prayer of Chryses, in the beginning of the poem :—

His prayer was granted by the deity,  
 Who, with his silver bow and arrows keen,  
 Descended from Olympus silently,  
 In likeness of the sable night unseen.

As if expressly to proclaim and demonstrate, however, that this momentary success was merely accidental, immediately upon the back of this stanza comes the following :—

His bow and quiver both behind him hang,  
 The arrows thine as often as he jogs,  
 And as he shot the bow was heard to twang,  
 And first his arrows flew at mules and dogs.

For the most part, indeed, Hobbes's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are no better than travesties of Homer's, the more ludicrous as being undesigned and unconscious. Never was there a more signal revenge than that which Hobbes afforded to imagination and poetry over his own unbelieving and scoffing philosophism by the publication of this work. It was almost as if the man born blind, who had all his life-time been attempting to prove that the sense which he himself wanted was no sense at all, and that that thing, colour, which it professed peculiarly to discern, was a mere delusion, should have himself at last taken the painter's brush and pallet in hand, and at-

tempted, in confirmation of his theory, to produce a picture by the mere senses of touch, taste, smell, and hearing. The great subject of the merits or demerits, the truth or falsehood, of Hobbes's system of metaphysical, ethical, and political philosophy, of course cannot be entered upon here. His works certainly gave a greater impulse to speculation in that field than those of any other English writer had ever before done ; even the startling paradoxes with which they abound, and their arrogant and contemptuous tone, co-operated with their eminent merits of a formal kind to arouse attention, and to provoke the investigation and discussion of the subjects of which they treat. It must also be admitted that scarcely any writings of their class contain so many striking remarks ; so much acute and ingenious, if not profound and comprehensive, thinking ; so much that, if not absolutely novel, has still about it that undefinable charm which even an old truth or theory receives from being born anew in an original mind. Such a mind Hobbes had, if any man ever had. Moreover, it is not necessary to deny that, however hollow or insufficient may have been the bases of his philosophy, he may have been successful in explaining some particular intellectual phenomena, or placing in a clearer light some important truths both in metaphysics and in morals. But as for what is properly to be called his system of philosophy,— and it is to be observed that, in his own writings, his views in metaphysics, in morals, and in politics are all bound and built up together into one consistent whole, the question of the truth or falsehood of that seems to be completely settled. Nobody now professes more than a partial Hobbism. If so much of the creed of the philo-

sopher of Malmesbury as affirms the non-existence of any essential distinction between right and wrong, the non-existence of conscience or the moral sense, the non-existence of anything beyond mere sensation in either motion or intelligence, and other similar negations of his moral and metaphysical doctrine, has still its satisfied disciples, who is now a Hobbit either in politics or in mathematics? Yet, certainly, it is in these latter departments that we must look for the greater part of what is absolutely original and peculiar in the notions of this teacher. Hobbes's philosophy of human nature is not amiss as a philosophy of Hobbes's own human nature. Without passions or imagination himself, and steering his own course through life by the mere calculations of an enlightened selfishness, one half of the broad map of humanity was to him nothing better than a blank. The consequence is, that, even when he reasons most acutely, he is constantly deducing his conclusions from insufficient premises. Then, like most men of ingenious rather than capacious minds, having once adopted his hypothesis or system, he was too apt to make facts bend to that rather than that to facts; a tendency which in his case was strengthened by another part of his character which has left its impression upon all his writings,—a much greater love of victory than of truth.

## NEVILE.

The most remarkable treatise on political philosophy which appeared in the interval between the Restoration and the Revolution is Henry Nevile's 'Plato Redivivus, or a Dialogue concerning Government;' which was first published in 1681, and went through at least a second

edition the same year. Nevile, who was born in 1620, and survived till 1694, had in the earlier part of his life been closely connected with Harrington, the author of the *Oceana*, and also with the founders of the Commonwealth, and he is commonly reckoned a republican writer; but the present work professes to advocate a monarchical form of government. Its leading principle is the same as that on which Harrington's work is founded, the necessity of all stable government being based upon property; but, in a Preface, in the form of an Address from the Publisher to the Reader, pains are taken to show that the author's application of this principle is different from Harrington's. It is observed, in the first place, that the principle in question is not exclusively or originally Harrington's; it had been discoursed upon and maintained in very many treatises and pamphlets before ever the *Oceana* came out; in particular in 'A Letter from an Officer in Ireland to His Highness the Lord Protector,' printed in 1653, "which was more than three years before *Oceana* was written." Besides, continues the writer, who is evidently Nevile himself, "Oceana was written (it being thought lawful so to do in those times) to evince out of these principles that England was not capable of any other government than a democracy. And this author, out of the same maxims or aphorisms of politics, endeavours to prove that they may be applied, naturally and fitly, to the redressing and supporting one of the best monarchies in the world, which is that of England." And the tenor of the work is in conformity with this declaration. Although the 'Plato Redivivus' has been reprinted in modern times (by Mr. Thomas Hollis), it is but little known; and it

is both very well written, and contains some curious illustrations of the state of opinion, and of other matters, in that day. The argument is carried on in the form of a dialogue, continued through three days or morning meetings, between a Venetian nobleman travelling in England, an English physician, under whose care he is recovering from an attack of illness, and an English gentleman, who is the chief speaker, and may be understood to represent Nevile himself. It is commonly said that the physician, or doctor, is intended for the famous Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation ; but this, we think, may be doubted. The conversations are supposed to have taken place only a short time before their publication ; and Harvey had died, at a great age, in 1658. In one place (p. 81), in reference to an observation by the doctor about the property of land in Padua being wholly in the possession of the nobility of Venice, the Venetian nobleman remarks, “ I perceive, doctor, by this question, that you have studied at Padua ; ” to which the doctor replies, “ No, really, sir, the small learning I have was acquired in our own university of Oxford, nor was I ever out of this island.” This may be meant for a blind, though why anything of the kind should be had recourse to is not apparent ; but the fact is that Harvey was abroad when a young man, and did actually study at Padua. There is no allusion anywhere in the book to Harvey’s great discovery. Yet the doctor is described as of the first eminence in his profession, and also as a person of great literary reputation both in his own and other countries :—“ an eminent physician of our nation, as renowned for his skill and cures at home as for his writings both here and abroad ; and who,

besides his profound knowledge in all learning, as well in other professions as his own, had particularly arrived at so exact and perfect a discovery of the formerly hidden parts of human bodies, that every one who can but understand Latin may by his means know more of anatomy than either Hippocrates or any of the ancients or ~~moderns~~ did or do perceive: and, if he had lived in the days of Solomon, that great philosopher would never have said *Cor hominis inscrutabile* [the heart of man is past finding out].” This points, no doubt, to some great anatomist and writer on anatomy, and the description is sufficiently applicable to suggest Harvey in the first instance; but it seems scarcely specific enough to fix the character upon him, without further evidence. We may note, by the bye, that at this time, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, it was the custom with physicians in London to pay their professional visits the first thing in the morning, and then to come home to receive patients at their own houses. About the middle of the Second Day’s Dialogue, which extends altogether (in the original edition) over 166 pages, the English Gentleman observes that he must hasten through his discourse; “for,” says he, “the time runs away, and I know the Doctor must be at home by noon, where he gives daily charitable advice to an infinity of poor people, who have need of his help, and who send or come for it, not having the confidence to send for him, since they have nothing to give him; though he be very liberal too of his visits to such, where he has any knowledge of them.” The three friends met at nine in the morning; but the Doctor also paid another visit to his patient in the evening. It is at that evening visit that the first of the

three dialogues, which is very short and merely introductory, is represented as having taken place : at parting the Venetian nobleman says, “ It begins to be darkish :— Boy, light your torch, and wait on these gentlemen down.”

One of the most remarkable of Nevile’s positions is that, upon his principles, there must some time or other ensue a revolution in France. In one place (p. 34) he observes :—

*Eng. Gent.* The modern despotical powers have been acquired by one of these two ways ;—either by pretending by the first founder thereof that he had a divine mission, and so gaining not only followers, but even easy access in some places without force to empire, and afterwards dilating their power by great conquests (thus Mahomet and Cingis Can began and established the Saracen and Tartarian kingdoms) ; or by a long series of wisdom in a prince, or chief magistrate of a mixed monarchy, and his council, who, by reason of the sleepiness and inadvertency of the people, have been able to extinguish the great nobility, or render them inconsiderable ; and, so by degrees taking away from the people their protectors, render them slaves. So the monarchies of France, and some other countries, have grown to what they are at this day ; there being left but a shadow of the three States in any of these monarchies, and so no bounds remaining to the regal power. But, since property remains still to the subjects, these governments may be said to be changed, but not founded or established ; for there is no maxim more infallible and holding in any science than this in politics, That empire is founded in property. Force or fraud may alter a government ; but it is property that must found and eternise it. Upon this undeniable aphorism we are to build most of our subsequent reasoning : in the mean time we may suppose that hereafter the great power of the King of France may diminish much, when his enraged and op-

pressed subjects come to be commanded by a prince of less courage, wisdom, and military virtue, when it will be very hard for any such king to govern tyrannically a country which is not entirely his own.

*Doctor.* Pray, Sir, give me leave to ask you, by the way, what is the reason that here in our country; where the peerage is lessened sufficiently, the king has not gotten as great an addition of power as accrues to the crown in France?

*Eng. Gent.* You will understand that, Doctor, before I have finished this discourse; but, to stay your stomach till then, you may please to know that in France the greatness of the nobility, which has been lately taken from them, did not consist in vast riches and revenues, but in great privileges and jurisdictions, which obliged the people to obey them; whereas our great peers in former times had not only the same great dependences; but very considerable revenues besides, in demesnes and otherwise. This vassalage over the people, which the peers of France had, being abolished, the power over those tenants, which before was in their lords, fell naturally, and of course, into the crown, although the lands and possessions, divested of those dependences, did and do still remain to the owners; whereas here in England; though the services are for the most part worn out and insignificant, yet, for want of providence and policy in former kings, who could not foresee the danger afar off, entails have been suffered to be cut off; and so two parts in ten of all those vast estates, as well manors as demesnes, by the luxury and folly of the owners, have been within these two hundred years purchased by the lesser gentry and the commons; which has been so far from advantaging the crown, that it has made the country scarce governable by monarchy.

Afterwards (p. 147) we have the following further explanation on the same subject:—

*Doctor.* You are pleased to talk of the oppression of the people under the King of France, and for that reason

call it a violent government, when, if I remember, you did once to-day extol the monarchy of the Turks for well-founded and natural: are not the people in that empire as much oppressed as in France?

*Eng. Gent.* By no means; unless you will call it oppression for the Grand Signior to feed all his people out of the produce of his own lands. And, though they serve him for it, yet that does not alter the case; for, if you set poor men to work and pay them for it, are you a tyrant, or rather are you not a good commonwealths-man, by helping those to live who have no other way of doing it but by their labour? But the King of France, knowing that his people have, and ought to have, property, and that he has no right to their possessions, yet takes what he pleases from them, without their consent, and contrary to law; so that, when he sets them on work, he pays them what he pleases, and that he levies out of their own estates. I do not affirm that there is no government in the world but where rule is founded in property; but I say there is no natural, fixed government but where it is so; and, when it is otherwise, the people are perpetually complaining, and the king in perpetual anxiety, always in fear of his subjects, and seeking new ways to secure himself; God having been so merciful to mankind that he has made nothing safe for princes but what is just and honest.

*Noble Ven.* But you were saying just now that this present constitution in France will fall when the props fail: we in Italy, who live in perpetual fear of the greatness of that kingdom, would be glad to hear something of the decaying of those props; what are they, I beseech you?

*Eng. Gent.* The first is the greatness of the present king, whose heroic actions and wisdom have extinguished envy in all his neighbour princes, and kindled fear, and brought him to be above all possibility of control at home; not only because his subjects fear his courage, but because they have his virtue in admiration, and, amidst all their miseries, cannot choose but have something of rejoicing to see how high he hath mounted the empire.

and honour of their nation. The next prop is the change of their ancient constitution, in the time of Charles the Seventh, by consent; for about that time, the country being so wasted by the invasion and excursions of the English, the States then assembled petitioned the King that he would give them leave to go home, and dispose of affairs himself and order the government for the future as he thought fit. Upon this his successor, Lewis the Eleventh, being a crafty prince, took an occasion to call the States no more, but to supply them with an *Assemblée des Notables*, which were certain men of his own nomination, like Barebones' parliament here, but that they were of better quality. These in succeeding reigns (being the best men of the kingdom) grew troublesome and intractable; so that for some years the edicts have been verified (that is, in our language, bills have been passed) in the Grand Chamber of the Parliament at Paris, commonly called the *Chambre d'Audience*, who lately, and since the imprisonment of President Broussel and others during this king's minority, have never refused or scrupled any edicts whatsoever. Now, whenever this great king dies, and the States of the kingdom are restored, these two great props of arbitrary power are taken away. Besides these two, the constitution of the government of France itself is somewhat better fitted than ours to permit extraordinary power in the prince; for the whole people there possessing lands are gentlemen, that is, infinitely the greater part; which was the reason why in their Assembly of Estates the deputies of the provinces (which we call here knights of the shire) were chosen by and out of the gentry, and sat with the peers in the same chamber, as representing the gentry only, called *petite noblesse*. Whereas our knights here (whatever their blood is) are chosen by commoners, and are commoners; our laws and government taking no notice of any nobility but the persons of the peers, whose sons are likewise commoners, even their eldest, whilst their father lives. Now gentry are ever more tractable by a prince than a wealthy and numerous commonalty; out of which our gentry (at least those we call so)

are raised from time to time; for whenever either a merchant, lawyer, tradesman, grazier, farmer, or any other, gets such an estate as that he or his son can live upon his lands, without exercising of any other calling, he becomes a gentleman. I do not say but that we have men very nobly descended amongst these; but they have no pre-eminence or distinction by the laws or government. Beside this, the gentry in France are very needy and very numerous; the reason of which is, that the elder brother, in most parts of that kingdom, hath no more share in the division of the paternal estate than the cadets or younger brothers, excepting the principal house with the orchards and gardens about it, which they call *Vol de chapon*, as who should say, As far as a capon can fly at once. This house gives him the title his father had; who was called Seignior, or Baron, or Count of that place; which if he sells, he parts with his baronship; and, for aught I know, becomes in time *roturier*, or ignoble. This practice divides the lands into so many small parcels that the possessors of them, being noble, and having little to maintain their nobility, are fain to seek their fortune, which they can find no where so well as at the court, and so become the king's servants and soldiers, for they are generally courageous, bold, and of a good mien. None of these can ever advance themselves but by their desert, which makes them hazard themselves very desperately, by which means great numbers of them are killed, and the rest come in time to be great officers, and live splendidly upon the king's purse, who is likewise very liberal to them, and, according to their respective merits, gives them often, in the beginning of a campaign, a considerable sum to furnish out their equipage. These are a great prop to the regal power, it being their interest to support it, lest their gain should cease, and they be reduced to be poor *provinciaux*, that is country gentlemen, again. Whereas, if they had such estates as our country gentry have, they would desire to be at home at their ease; whilst these (having ten times as much from the king as their own estate can yield them, which supply must fail if the

king's revenue were reduced) are perpetually engaged to make good all exorbitances.

*Doctor.* This is a kind of governing by property too ; and it puts me in mind of a gentleman of good estate in our country, who took a tenant's son of his to be his servant, whose father not long after dying left him a living of about ten pound a-year : the young man's friends came to him, and asked him why he would serve now he had an estate of his own able to maintain him. His answer was, that his own lands would yield him but a third part of what his service was worth to him in all ; besides, that he lived a pleasant life, wore good clothes, kept good company, and had the conversation of very pretty maids that were his fellow servants, which made him very well digest the name of being a servant.

*Eng. Gent.* This is the very case. But yet service (in both these cases) is no inheritance ; and, when there comes a peaceable king in France, who will let his neighbours be quiet, or one that is covetous, these fine gentlemen will lose their employments, and their king this prop ; and the rather because these gentlemen do not depend (as was said before) in any kind upon the great lords (whose standing interest is at court), and so cannot in a change be by them carried over to advance the court designs against their own good and that of their country. And thus much is sufficient to be said concerning France.

OTHER PROSE WRITERS—CUDWORTH, MORE,  
BARROW, &c.

The most illustrious antagonist of metaphysical Hobbism, when first promulgated, was Dr. Ralph Cudworth, the First Part of whose 'True Intellectual System of the Universe, wherein all the Reason and Philosophy of Atheism is Confuted,' was first published in 1678. As a vast store-house of learning, and also as a display of wonderful powers of subtle and far-reaching speculation, this cele-

brated work is almost unrivalled in our literature ; and it is also written in a style of elastic strength and compass which places its author in a high rank among our prose classics. Along with Cudworth may be mentioned his friend and brother Platonist, Dr. Henry More, the author of numerous theological and philosophical works, and remarkable for the union of some of the most mystic notions with the clearest style, and of the most singular credulity with powers of reasoning of the highest order. Other two great theological writers of this age were the voluminous Richard Baxter and the learned and eloquent Dr. Robert Leighton, Archbishop of Glasgow. "Baxter," says Bishop Burnet, "was a man of great piety ; and, if he had not meddled in too many things, would have been esteemed one of the learned men of the age. He writ near two hundred books ; of these three are large folios : he had a very moving and pathetical way of writing, and was his whole life long a man of great zeal and much simplicity ; but was most unhappily subtle and metaphysical in every thing."\* Of Leighton, whom he knew intimately, the same writer has given a much more copious account, a few sentences of which we will transcribe :— " His preaching had a sublimity both of thought and expression in it. The grace and gravity of his pronunciation was such that few heard him without a very sensible emotion. . . . It was so different from all others, and indeed from everything that one could hope to rise up to, that it gave a man an indignation at himself and all others. . . . His style was rather too fine ; but there was a majesty and beauty in it that left so deep an impression that I cannot yet forget the sermons I heard him preach

\* Own Time, i. 180.

thirty years ago.”\* The writings of Archbishop Leighton that have come down to us have been held by some of the highest minds of our own day—Coleridge for one—to bear out Burnet’s affectionate panegyric. But perhaps the greatest genius among the theological writers of this age was the famous Dr. Isaac Barrow, popularly known chiefly by his admirable Sermons, but renowned also in the history of modern science as, next to Newton himself, the greatest mathematician of his time. “As a writer,” the late Professor Dugald Stewart has well said of Barrow, “he is equally distinguished by the redundancy of his matter and by the pregnant brevity of his expression; but what more peculiarly characterises his manner is a certain air of powerful and of conscious facility in the execution of whatever he undertakes. Whether the subject be mathematical, metaphysical, or theological, he seems always to bring to it a mind which feels itself superior to the occasion, and which, in contending with the greatest difficulties, puts forth but half its strength. He has somewhere spoken of his *Lectiones Mathematicæ* (which it may, in passing, be remarked, display *metaphysical* talents of the highest order) as extemporaneous effusions of his pen; and I have no doubt that the same epithet is still more literally applicable to his pulpit discourses. It is, indeed, only thus that we can account for the variety and extent of his voluminous remains, when we recollect that the author died at the age of forty-six.”† To these names may be added those of John Bunyan, the author of the Pilgrim’s Progress, the most interesting of allegories, and of various other re-

\* Own Time, i. 135.

† Dissertation on the Progress of Philosophy, p. 45.

ligious works ; Izaak Walton, the mild-tempered angler and biographer ; Sir William Temple, the lively, agreeable, and well-informed essayist and memoirist ; and many others might be enumerated, if it were our object to compile a catalogue instead of noticing only the principal lights of our literature.

PROGRESS OF SCIENCE IN ENGLAND BEFORE THE  
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

A few far separated names, and a still smaller number of distinct facts, make up the history of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences in England to the latter part of the fifteenth century. Nor from that date to the age of Bacon, or throughout the era of the Tudors, have we perhaps so many as a dozen English names of any note to show in this department. Yet before the end of the sixteenth century scientific speculation and experiment were busy in all the principal countries of continental Europe, and the first steps in the march of discovery had already been taken in various directions. In pure science, Trigonometry, of which the foundations had been laid in the middle ages by the Arabian geometers, had been brought almost to the state in which it still remains by Purbach and his much more illustrious pupil John Müller (Regiomontanus) ; Müller had also created a new arithmetic by the invention of Decimal Fractions : Algebra, known in its elements since the beginning of the thirteenth century, had been carried to the length of cubic equations by Ferreo, Tartalea, and Cardan, and of bi-quadratic by Cardan's pupil, Ludovico Ferrari, and had acquired all the generalization of expression it yet possesses in the hands first of Stifel, and soon after of Vieta. The true System of the Universe had been revealed by

Copernicus ; and Tycho Brahe, although rejecting the hypothesis of his predecessor, as well as clinging to the old superstitions of astrology, had both wonderfully improved the instruments and the art of observation, and had greatly enlarged our knowledge of the heavens. The Variation of the Compass had been observed by Columbus ; in Mechanics, the theory of the inclined plane had been investigated by Cardan, the pulley had been explained by Ubaldi, and some cases of the composition of forces, and other propositions in statics, had been solved by Stevinus ; in Optics, the use of spectacles, which can be traced back to the early part of the fourteenth century, had been followed by the discovery of the crystalline lens of the eye by Maurolico, and the invention of the camera obscura by Baptista della Porta. The purely physical sciences had also made considerable advances. Mondino of Bologna, who has been called the father of modern Anatomy, had set the example of the practice of dissection so early as the year 1315 ; and the knowledge of the structure of the human body, and of its functions, had been prosecuted since his time with great success both in Italy and France by Achillini, Berenger (Carpi), Jacques Dubois (Silvius), Charles Etienne (Stephanus), and especially by Vesalius, Fallopius, and Eustachius, whose celebrated Anatomical Tables, completed in 1552, were still the most perfect that had yet been produced when they were first published more than a century and a half after the author's death. In Medicine, the Hippocratic method, revived by Nicholas Leonicenus before the end of the fifteenth century, had been cultivated and advanced by Cop, Ruel, Gonthier, Fuchs, and others ; and considerable progress had ever

been made in emancipating the art from authority, and founding a new school on the basis of experience and common sense, or at least independent speculation, by Fernel, Argentier of Turin, and, above all, by the original and enterprising, though unregulated, genius of Paracelsus. Conrad Gesner, Rondelet, and Aldrovandus, by the large additions they had made to the facts collected by Aristotle, Pliny, *Ælian*, and other ancient writers, and by their attempts at classification and system, had more than laid the foundations of modern Zoology. In Botany, Otto Brunfels of Strasburg had published his magnificent *Herbarum Eicones*, which has been regarded as leading the way in the restoration of the science; the route opened by him had been farther explored by Ruel and Fuchs, already mentioned (the latter the name commemorated in the well-known *Fuchsia*), by Matthioli, and others; Conrad Gesner had, about the middle of the sixteenth century, not only collected and arranged all the knowledge of his predecessors, but had given a new form to the science by his own discoveries; many accessions to his lists had been contributed by Dodoens (Dononæus), Cæsalpinus, John and Caspar Bauhin, and especially by l'Ecluse (Clusius); and before the end of the century the first natural system of plants had been devised and published by Lobel. Finally, Chemistry, in which numerous facts had been long ascertained by Roger Bacon, Geber and the other Arabian physicians, Raymond Lully and the other alchemists, had been cultivated in later times by Basil Valentine (the discoverer of antimony), George Agricola (who first mentions bismuth), and Paracelsus (in whose writings we find the first notice of zinc), and in the hands of Dornaeus, Crot-

lins, and Bartholetus had begun to assume the rudiments of a scientific form ; and the remarkable work of Agricola *De Re Metallica*, first published in 1546, followed as it was, before the end of the century, by the writings and researches of Ercher, Fachs, and Palissy (the great improver of the manufacture of enamelled pottery), may be said to have already established the science of Mineralogy, and also to have furnished some indications of that of Geology.

In England, meanwhile, much of this progress that had been made in other countries probably remained unknown. We have most to boast of in the physical sciences ; medicine was both practised and taught on the revived principles of the ancient physicians, in the early part of the sixteenth century, by the learned Linacre, the translator of Galen, the founder of the medical lectureships at Oxford and Cambridge, and the first president of the College of Physicians, which was incorporated by Henry VIII. in 1518 ; some valuable works on botany and zoology were published in the latter half of the century by William Turner, particularly the earliest English Herbal, the first part of which appeared at London in 1551, the second and third at Cologne in 1562 and 1568 ; \* the north and south poles of the magnet are described by Robert Norman, a writer on navigation, in 1581 ; and at the head of the modern sciences of navigation and electricity stands the name of Dr. William Gilbert, whose treatise *De Magnete*, published in 1600, afforded one of the most remarkable specimens that had

\* Lobel, also, already mentioned, though a Fleming by birth, spent the latter years of his life in England, where James I. gave him the appointment of royal botanist.

then appeared both of ingenious experimenting and of sound inductive reasoning. To Gilbert is assigned the invention of artificial magnets. In the pure sciences, and those more immediately dependent upon mathematics, we did very little during this period. Cuthbert Tonstall or Tunstall, Bishop of London, and afterwards of Durham, published a Latin Treatise on Arithmetic (*De Arte Suppatandi*) at London, in 1522, which was frequently reprinted abroad in the course of the century. This performance, so far from containing anything new, scarcely attempts even to explain the principles of the old rules and processes which it details and exemplifies ; but it has the merit of a simplicity and a freedom from extraneous matter which were very rare in that age. \* From what Tonstall says in the dedication of his book to his friend, Sir Thomas More, it would appear that, like almost every other nation in Europe, we were already possessed of arithmetical manuals in the vernacular tongue, though of a very low order. Of much greater importance were various works produced about the same date, or a little later, by William Recorde, the physician. "He was the first," says the authority to which we have just referred, "who wrote on arithmetic in English (that is, anything of a higher cast than the works mentioned by Tonstall) ; the first who wrote on geometry in English ; the first who introduced algebra into England ; the first who wrote on astronomy and the doctrine of the sphere in English ; and, finally, the first Englishman (in all probability) who adopted the system of Coperni-

\* Notices of English Mathematical and Astronomical writers between the Norman Conquest and the year 1600, in Companion to the Almanac for 1837, p. 30.

qua."\* Recorde's *Ground of Arts*, a treatise on arithmetic, first published in 1551, was many times reprinted, and kept its ground as a common schoolbook till the end of the seventeenth century. His *Pathway to Knowledge*, also first printed in 1551, is a treatise of practical geometry, but containing also an account of the theorems in the first four books of Euclid, though without the demonstrations. His *Castle of Knowledge*, published in 1556, is a treatise on astronomy, both theoretical and practical; and it is in this work that Recorde shows himself, in the words of the writer before us, "as much of a Copernican as any reasonable man could well be at the time; at least as much so (in profession) as was Copernicus himself, who makes no decided declaration of belief in his own system, but says, it is by no means necessary that hypotheses should be true, or even probable,—it suffices that they make calculation and observation agree."† Recorde's *Whetstone of Wit*, first published in 1553, is a treatise of algebra, although the author does not use that name except in calling the application of indeterminate numbers to the solution of equations "the rule of Algeber." "In this treatise," says the writer of the Notices, "he appears to have compounded, for the first time, the rule for extracting the square roots of multi-nominal algebraical quantities, and also to have first used the sign  $=$ . In other respects he follows Scheubel, whom he cites, and Stifel, whom he does not cite. There is nothing on cubic equations, nor does he appear to have known anything of the Italian algebraists. . . . . Recorde was

\* Companion to the Almanac for 1837. An interesting account of Recorde's various works follows, pp. 30—37.

† Ibid. p. 36.

one of the first who had a distinct perception of the difference between an algebraical operation and its numerical interpretation, to the extent of seeing that the one is independent of the other ; and also he appears to have broken out of the consideration of integer numbers, to a much greater extent than his contemporaries." In his perception of general results connected with the fundamental notation of algebra, this writer conceives Recorde to show himself superior even to Vieta himself, though of course immeasurably below the Italian in the invention of means of expression. "All his writings considered together," it is added, " Recorde was no common man. It is evident that he did not write very freely at first in English, but his style improves as he goes on. His writings continued to the end of the century to be those in common use on the subjects on which he wrote, though we must gather this more from the adoption of ideas and notation than from absolute citation." \* Another English Copernican of this early date was John Field, the author of an Ephemeris for 1557, published in the preceding year. In the earliest English work on cosmography, nevertheless, "The Cosmographical Glass, compiled by William Cunningham," London, 1559, the system taught is that of Ptolemy, nor is the least hint of that of Copernicus to be found in the book.† In 1573 was published the first English translation of Euclid, professedly by the famous John Dee, the astrologer and *soi-disant* magician, but commonly believed to have been actually the performance of Sir Henry Billingsley, whom, however, the writer of the Notices before us supposes to

\* Companion to the Almanac for 1837, p. 37.

† *Ibid.* pp. 35 and 37.

have been a pupil of Dee, who only executed the more mechanical part of the undertaking, working under his master's general, if not special, instructions. The first Latin translation of the Elements of Euclid, that of Campanus, had appeared at Venice in 1482 (the original Greek not having been printed till 1530); and the only translations into any modern European tongues which preceded that of Dee were, that of Tartalea into Italian, Venice, 1543; those of Scheubel of the 7th, 8th, and 9th books, and of Holtzmann of the preceding six, into German, Augsburg, 1562 and 1565; and that of Henrion into French, Paris, 1565 (as is supposed). Dee's translation appears either to have been made from the original, or at least to have been corrected by the Greek text. "It contains," says the writer before us, "the whole of the fifteen books commonly considered as making up the Elements of Euclid, and forms the first body of complete mathematical demonstration which appears in our language. For, though the works of Recorde were much less dogmatical than the elementary school-books of the eighteenth, and (for the most part) of the present century, yet they partake of the character which they tended perhaps to perpetuate, and in many instances teach rules without demonstration, or with at most a rough kind of illustration. . . . The appearance of Euclid in an English form probably saved the credit of the exact sciences, and in this point of view Dee and Billingsley have exercised a material and beneficial influence upon their favourite pursuits."\* Of Dee's scientific works the greater number still remain in manuscript; among those that have been published are a

\* Companion to the Almanac for 1837, p. 39.

Latin treatise on Parallax, and a preface to Field's Ephemeris for 1557 (mentioned above), from which latter it appears that Dee also was a Copernican. Contemporary with this mathematician was Leonard Digges, who died in 1574, after having published various works, most of which were republished, with additions, by his son Leonard Digges, who lived till 1595. The writings of both father and son relate for the most part to mensuration and the art of war, and are characterised by the application of arithmetical geometry in these departments. One, a work of Thomas Digges, entitled *Alae sive Scalae Mathematicae*, 1573, being a tract upon parallaxes; undertaken at the suggestion of Lord Burleigh, in consequence of the appearance of the remarkable new star discovered the preceding year by Tycho Brahe in the constellation Cassiopeia, "is," says the author of the Notices, "the first work of an English writer in which we have noticed anything on spherical trigonometry, and the writings of Copernicus are more than once referred to as the source of this subject." From some passages, Thomas Digges appears, this writer thinks, "to have been a believer in the real motion of the earth, and not merely an admirer of the system of Copernicus as an explanatory hypothesis."\* On the whole it may be said that nearly the whole history of the advancement of English mathematical science in the sixteenth century is connected with the names of Recorde, Dee, and Digges. If a judgment might be formed from some works published between 1580 and 1600, the author of the Notices is inclined to suppose that, instead of making any progress, science rather declined among us in that interval.

\* Companion to the Almanac for 1837, pp. 40, 41.

“The writers,” he observes, “seem to have abandoned what had been newly introduced, and to have betaken themselves to older authors and other notions.” Among the productions in question are, the Mathematical Jewel, by John Blagrave, of Reading, 1585, a treatise on a new mathematical instrument, apparently a projection of the sphere, for the construction of problems in astronomy, which proceeds upon the Ptolemaic system of the world, and does not contain a hint of the Copernican, although Copernicus is several times alluded to as an observer; a work on the projection of the sphere, described as “very poor and insufficient,” published in 1590, by Thomas Hood, the inventor of an astronomical instrument called Hood’s Staff; M. Blundevile’s Exercises, containing six treatises on arithmetic, cosmography, &c., 1594, in which is found a set of tables of sines, tangents, and seconds, being the first printed in England, but the author of which expressly denounces the Copernican system of the world as a “false supposition,” although he admits that by help of it Copernicus had “made truer demonstrations of the motions and revolutions of the celestial spheres than ever were made before;” and various works by a Thomas Hill, one of which, The School of Skill, London, 1599, is described as “an account of the heavens and the surface of the earth, replete with those notions on astrology and physics which are not very common in the works of Recorde or Blundevile.”\* Hill notices the scheme of Pythagoras and Copernicus, by which, as he expresses it, they “took the earth from the middle of the world, and placed it in a peculiar orb.” “But,” he adds, “overpassing such reasons, lest by the

\* Companion to the Almanac for 1837, p. 43.

newness of the arguments they may offend or trouble young students in the art, we therefore (by true knowledge of the wise) do attribute the middle seat of the world to the earth, and appoint it the centre of the whole."

ENGLISH SCIENCE IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.—  
BACON.—NAPIER.

But the daylight that had already arisen on the continent of Europe was soon to visit our island. The next age, in which Galileo, and Kepler, and Descartes, and Torricelli, and Pascal, and Huygens, revolutionised the entire structure and character of the mathematical and mathematico-physical sciences abroad, was ushered in among us by the bold speculations of Bacon and the brilliant inventions of Napier. Of what has been called the Baconian philosophy, and the amount of the effect it may be supposed to have had in impelling and directing the progress of science, we have already spoken. The writings of Bacon probably did more service by exciting and diffusing the spirit of scientific observation and research, than by any new light they afforded for its guidance, which in truth was no more than it must have furnished to itself as soon as it was fairly awakened and engaged in operating. At all events, neither the pure sciences of figure and number, nor even those of the mixed sciences that have been chiefly advanced by the aid of mathematics and calculation, among which are astronomy, mechanics, and all the principal branches of what is commonly called natural philosophy, can well have received either impulse or direction from Bacon, who was not only entirely unacquainted with geometry.

and algebra, but evidently insensible even of their value or their use. Of those mathematical and analytical investigations which are the chief glory of the science of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there is not the slightest anticipation in Bacon, nor any direction or suggestion by which they could have been at all promoted. Napier's great invention of logarithms, on the contrary, has from his own day to the present hour been one of the most active and efficient servants of all the sciences dependent upon calculation ; nor could those of them in which the most splendid triumphs have been achieved have possibly been carried to the height they have reached without its assistance. The *Mirifici Logarithmorum Canonis Descriptio* was published by Napier at Edinburgh in a small quarto volume in the year 1614 ; and logarithms received their improved form, or that in which we now possess them, from their inventor and his friend Henry Briggs, in the same or the following year, although they were not partially published in that form till 1618, after the death of Napier, by Briggs, by whom the calculations had been performed. " Many inventions," says a late distinguished historian of science, " have been eclipsed or obscured by new discoveries, or they have been so altered by subsequent improvements that their original form can hardly be recognised, and, in some instances, has been entirely forgotten. This has almost always happened to the discoveries made at an early period in the progress of science, and before their principles were fully unfolded. It has been quite otherwise with the invention of logarithms, which came out of the hands of the author so perfect that it has never yet received but one material improvement

—that which it derived, as has just been said, from the ingenuity of his friend in conjunction with his own. Subsequent improvements in science, instead of offering anything that could supplant this invention, have only enlarged the circle to which its utility extended. Logarithms have been applied to numberless purposes which were not thought of at the time of their first construction. Even the sagacity of the author did not see the immense fertility of the principle he had discovered : he calculated his tables merely to facilitate arithmetical, and chiefly trigonometrical computation ; and little imagined that he was at the same time constructing a scale whereon to measure the density of the strata of the atmosphere and the heights of mountains, that he was actually computing the areas and the lengths of innumerable curves, and was preparing for a calculus which was yet to be discovered many of the most refined and most valuable of its resources. Of Napier, therefore, if of any man, it may safely be pronounced, that his name will never be eclipsed by any one more conspicuous, or his invention be superseded by anything more valuable.”\* In the same volume with his logarithms Napier gave to the world the two very elegant and useful trigonometrical theorems known by his name.

#### OTHER ENGLISH MATHEMATICIANS OF THE EARLIER PART OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

Of the other English mathematicians of this age, Harriot, Briggs, and Horrocks may be mentioned as the most famous. Thomas Harriot, who died in 1621, is the

\* Playfair's 'Dissertation on the Progress of Mechanical and Physical Science (in Encyclopaedia Britannica), p. 418.

author of a work on algebra (*Artis Analyticæ Praxis*), not published till ten years after his death, which makes an epoch in the history of that science, explaining in their full extent certain views first partially propounded by Vieta, and greatly simplifying some of the operations. To Harriot we also owe the convenient improvement of the substitution of the small for the capital letters which had been used up to this time. It appears, too, from his unpublished papers preserved at Petworth (formerly the seat of his patron the Earl of Northumberland), that he is entitled to a high place among the astronomers of his day, having, among other things, discovered the solar spots before any announcement of them was made by Galileo, and observed the satellites of Jupiter within a very few days after Galileo had first seen them.\* Henry Briggs, besides the share he had, as mentioned above, in the improvement of logarithms, is entitled to the honour of having made a first step towards what is called the binomial theorem in algebra, finally discovered by Newton. He died in 1630. His *Trigonometria Britannica*, or tables of the logarithms of sines, &c. (in the preface to which is his distant view of the binomial theorem), was published in 1633, by his friend Henry Gellibrand, who had been for some time associated with him in the calculation of the logarithms. Samuel Horrocks, or Horrox, a native of Toxteth, near Liverpool, was an astronomer of remarkable genius, who died in 1641, at the early age of twenty-two. He was the first person who saw the planet Venus on the body of the sun: his

\* These facts, ascertained from the examination of Harriot's papers, then in possession of the Earl of Egremont, were first stated by Zach in the *Astronomical Ephemeris of the Berlin Royal Society of Sciences* for 1788.

account of this observation (made 24th November, 1638) was printed by Hevelius at the end of his *Mercurius in Sole Visus*, published at Dantzig in 1662. But Horrocks is principally famous in the history of astronomy as having anticipated, hypothetically, the view of the lunar motions which Newton afterwards showed to be a necessary consequence of the theory of gravitation. This discovery was given to the world by Dr. Wallis, in a collection of Horrocks's posthumous papers which he published at London in 1672. It had been originally communicated by Horrocks in a letter (which has also been preserved, and is to be found in some copies of Wallis's publication) to his friend William Crabtree, whose fate, as well as genius, was singularly similar to his own. Crabtree was a clothier at Broughton, near Manchester, and had made many valuable astronomical observations (a portion of which have been preserved and printed) when he was cut off only a few months after his friend Horrocks, and about the same early age. Another member of this remarkable cluster of friends, whom a common devotion to science united at a time when the fiercest political heats were occupying and distracting most of their countrymen, was William Gascoigne, of Middleton, in Yorkshire, who also died very young, having been killed, about two years after the decease of Horrocks and Crabtree, fighting on the royalist side, at the battle of Marston Moor. He appears to have first used two convex glasses in the telescope, and to have been the original inventor of the wire micrometer and of its application to the telescope, and also of the application of the telescope to the quadrant. A fourth of these associated cultivators of science in the north of

England was William Milbourn, who was curate of Brancespeth, near Durham, and who is stated to have made his way by himself to certain of the algebraic discoveries first published in Harriot's work, and likewise to have, by his own observations, detected the errors in the astronomical tables of Lansberg, and verified those of Kepler. The names of several other astronomical observers of less eminent merit who existed at this time in England have also been preserved; among which may be particularised that of Jeremiah Shackerly, the author of a work entitled *Tabulae Britannicæ*, published at London in 1653, which is stated to have been compiled ~~mostly~~ from papers left by Horrocks that were afterwards destroyed in the great fire of 1666.\* Nor ought we to pass over the name of Edmund Gunter, the inventor of the useful wooden logarithmic scale still known by his name, and also of the sector and of the common surveyor's chain, and the author of several works, one of which, his *Canon Triangulorum*, first published at London in 1620, is the earliest printed table of logarithmic sines, &c., constructed on the improved or common system of logarithms. Briggs's tables, as has been stated above, were not printed till 1633. Gunter also appears to have been the author of the convenient terms cosine, cotangent, &c., for sine, tangent, &c., of the complement. "Whatever, in short," as has been observed, "could be done by a well-informed and ready-witted person to make the new theory of logarithms more immediately available in practice to those who were not skilful mathematicians,

\* See a notice of these English astronomers of the earlier half of the seventeenth century, in an article on Horrocks in the Penny Cyclopaedia, xii. 305.

was done by Gunter."\* He has moreover the credit of having been the first observer of the important fact of the variation of the compass itself varying. Another eminent English mathematician of this age was John Greaves, the author of the first good account of the Pyramids of Egypt, which he visited in 1638, and of various learned works relating to the Oriental astronomy and geography, and the weights and measures of the ancients. He died in 1652. Briggs, Gunter, Gellibrand, and Greaves were all at one time or other professors in the new establishment of Gresham College, London, which may be regarded as having considerably assisted the promotion of science in England in the early part of the seventeenth century. The founder, as is well known, was the eminent London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham, who died in 1579, and left his house in Bishopsgate-street for the proposed seminary, although the reserved interest of his widow prevented his intentions from being carried into effect till after her decease in 1596. The seven branches of learning and science for which professorships were instituted were divinity, astronomy, music, geometry, law, physic, and rhetoric; the first four under the patronage of the corporation of the City of London, the three last under that of the Mercers' Company. The chair of geometry, in which Briggs and Greaves had sate, was occupied in a later age by Barrow and Hooke; and that of astronomy, in which Gellibrand had succeeded Gunter, was afterwards filled by Wren. Another Gresham professorship that has to boast of at least two distinguished names in the seventeenth century is that of music, which was first held by the

\* Penny Cyclopaedia, xi. 497.

famous Dr. John Bull, and afterwards by Sir William Petty.

**HARVEY—THE CIRCULATION OF THE BLOOD ; ANATOMY, AND NATURAL HISTORY.**

In the physical sciences, the event most glorious to England in this age is the discovery of the circulation of the blood by Dr. William-Harvey. To our illustrious countryman at least is indisputably due the demonstration and complete establishment of this fact, or what alone in a scientific sense is to be called its discovery, even if we admit all the importance that ever has been or can be claimed for the conjectures and partial anticipations of preceding speculators. Even Aristotle speaks of the blood flowing from the heart to all parts of the body ; and Galen infers, from the valves in the pulmonary artery, its true course in passing through that vessel. After the revival of anatomy, Mondino and his successor Berenger taught nearly the same doctrine with regard to the passage of the blood from the right side of the heart to the lungs. Much nearer approaches were made to Harvey's discovery in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The famous Michael Servetus (put to death at Geneva for his anti-trinitarian heresies), in a work printed in 1553, distinctly describes the passage of the blood from the right to the left side of the heart, telling us that it does not take place, as commonly supposed, through the middle partition of the heart (the *septum*, which in fact is impervious), but in a highly artificial manner through the lungs, where it is changed to a bright colour ; adding, that after it has thus been transferred from the arterial vein (that is, the pulmonary artery) to

the venous artery (that is, the pulmonary vein), it is then diffused from the left ventricle of the heart throughout the arteries (or blood-vessels) of the whole body.\* A few years after, in 1559, the pulmonary, or small circulation, as it is called, was again brought forward as an original discovery of his own by Realodus Columbus, in his work *De Re Anatomica*, published at Venice in that year. And, in 1571, Cæsalpinus of Arezzo, in his *Quæstiones Peripateticæ*, also published at Venice, inferred from the swelling of veins *below* ligatures that the blood must flow *from* these vessels *to* the heart. So far had the investigation of the subject, or rather speculation respecting it, proceeded when it was taken up by Harvey. From Fabricius ab Aquapendente, under whom he studied at Padua about the year 1600, Harvey, then in his twenty-second or twenty-third year, learned the fact of the existence of valves in many of the veins, which were evidently so constructed as to prevent the flow of blood in these vessels *from* the heart, and at the same time not to impede its motion in the opposite direction. According to Harvey's own account, given in a

\* This remarkable passage is often erroneously quoted from the Fifth Book of Servetus's first publication, entitled *De Trinitatis Erroribus*, which was printed, probably at Basle, in 1531. It occurs, in fact, in the Fifth book of the First Part of quite another work, his *Christianismi Restitutio*, published at Vienne in 1553. Of this work only one copy is known to be in existence, which has been minutely described by De Bure, who calls it the rarest of all books. See his *Bibliographie Instructive*, i. 418—422, where the passage relating to the circulation of the blood is extracted at length. It is remarkable, however, that what is believed to be the original manuscript, in the author's own handwriting, of the First Part of the *Christianismi Restitutio* also still survives. See *De Bure*, i. 423, 424.

conversation with Boyle, which the latter has reported in his treatise on Final Causes, it was the existence of these valves in the veins that first suggested to him the idea of his general theory of the circulation. Having satisfied himself by much consideration of the subject, and by many dissections and other careful experiments both on dead and living bodies, that his views were at least in the highest degree probable, he is supposed to have first announced the doctrine of the complete circulation of the blood from the left ventricle of the heart through the whole system back to the right by means of the arteries and veins, in his delivery of the Lumleian lectures on anatomy and surgery before the College of Physicians in 1615. But it was not till the year 1619 that he came before the world with the full demonstration of his theory in his treatise entitled '*Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus.*' The best proof of the novelty of the views propounded in this work is furnished by the general incredulity with which they were received by the profession in every part of Europe. It is said that there was scarcely an instance known of the doctrine of the circulation being received on its first promulgation by any anatomist or medical man who had passed his fortieth year. It is probable, indeed, that even the small circulation, or the passage of the blood from the right to the left ventricle of the heart through the lungs, which was really all that had been hitherto discovered, was as yet but little known, or generally looked upon rather as at most an ingenious supposition than a well-established fact. At all events there can be no doubt that, beyond this point, all was darkness and error—that, notwithstanding some vague,

inaccurate generalizations that had been thrown out by Servetus, Columbus, and one or two other writers, the circulation of the blood through the whole course of the arteries and veins, so far from being believed in, had scarcely been heard of or dreamed of by anybody before it was demonstrated by Harvey. The notion, we may say, universally entertained still was, as in the earliest times, that the veins were merely sacks of stagnant or at least unprogressive blood, and the arteries nothing more than air-tubes. Harvey himself, in proceeding to propound his theory, expresses his apprehension lest the opposition of the views he is about to state to those hitherto entertained might make all men his enemies ; and it appears that he encountered as much popular as professional opposition and odium by his book, which was looked upon as a daring attack at once upon antiquity, common sense, and nature herself. It was indeed the beginning and proclamation of a complete revolution in medical science. If the circulation of the blood was true, the greater part of all that had been hitherto taught and believed on the subjects of anatomy and physiology was false. As has been strikingly observed by a writer of our own day, “a person who tries to imagine what the science of medicine could have been while it took no account of this fact, on which, as a basis, all certain reasoning about the phenomena of life must rest, is prepared for what old medical books exhibit of the writhings of human reason in attempts to explain and to form theories while a fatal error was mixed with every supposition.” \*

Harvey, whose life was extended to the year 1658,

\* Arnott's Elements of Physics, 4th edit. i. 519.

contributed to the improvement of anatomical and physiological knowledge by various subsequent publications; and the progress of discovery in this department was also aided by others of our countrymen, particularly by Dr. Nathaniel Highmore (who has given his name to that cavity in the upper jaw called the *Antrum Highmorianum*), Dr. Francis Glisson (the discoverer of what is called the capsule of Glisson, lying between the liver and the stomach), Dr. Jolyffe, Dr. Thomas Wharton, and Drs. Thomas Willis and Richard Lower, celebrated as the first accurate anatomists of the brain and nerves. Some of the most important publications of the three last mentioned, however, were not produced till after the Restoration. In natural history little was done in England in the earlier half of the seventeenth century. The great authority in botany was still the 'Herbal, or General History of Plants,' of John Gerard, originally published in 1597, which was for the most part merely a hasty and inartificial compilation from Dodonæus, and nearly as destitute of scientific as of literary merit.

## NATURAL PHILOSOPHY.

But even in the mathematico-physical sciences, and the other branches of what is commonly called natural philosophy, it is wonderful how little general effect appears to have been produced in this country either by the example or by the actual discoveries of Kepler, Galileo, Torricelli, Pascal, Des Cartes, and their associates and immediate successors abroad, and of Napier, Briggs, Horrocks, and the few others among ourselves whose names have a place in this period of the history

of science beside those of their illustrious continental contemporaries ;—how little of the general darkness they had dispersed—how little acceptance, or even attention, either their doctrines or the spirit of their philosophy seem to have met with from the common herd of our English speculators and professional men. Some notion of the barbarous state in which physical science still remained among us after the middle of the seventeenth century may be obtained from a curious volume entitled ‘Archelogia Nova, or New Principles of Philosophy,’ which was published in the year 1663 by a Dr. Gideon Harvey, who had held the high office of physician to the forces in Flanders, and may be therefore regarded as having stood nearly at the head of his profession. Besides an introduction on philosophy in general, Dr. Harvey’s work treats of metaphysics and of natural theology, as well as of natural philosophy or physics ; but the last-mentioned subject occupies the greater portion of the book. The author makes an apology in his preface for some deficiency of polish in his style ; the learned tongues, he would have us understand, apparently, had occupied his whole time to the exclusion of the vernacular : “ It was never my fortune,” he says, “ to read two sheets of any English book in my life, or even to have had the view of so much as the title-leaf of an English grammar.” His English certainly is not always very classical ; but the language of his explanations and reasonings would usually be intelligible enough if the matter were equally so. The work, as we have seen, professes to be a *new* system of philosophy ; and it does contain, certainly, various new crotchets ; but the author’s views are founded, nevertheless, in the main upon the

old Aristotelian and mediæval notions, and one of his principal aims throughout is to refute the recent innovators who in so many departments had been questioning or denying these long universally admitted *dicta*. Thus, in an early chapter, he falls with great violence upon Van Helmont for his dissent from the authority of Hippocrates, Galen, and Aristotle in various points of physical doctrine, and especially for his rejection of the four elements. Afterwards he attacks Des Cartes, whom he charges with no fewer than seventeen serious errors; amongst which are, "that the moon and the other planets borrow their light from the sun"—"that the earth is nothing different from a planet, and consequently that the other planets are inhabitable"—"that the moon is illuminated by the earth"—and, "that he assumes most of the erroneous opinions of Copernicus." Harvey, however, professes to be quite a common-sense philosopher: "The only instruments," he says in his preface, "that I have employed in the sounding of the natures of things are the external senses, assuming nothing, or concluding no inference, without their advice and undoubted assent, whether in metaphysics, theology, or natural philosophy. Those terms or notions that only give a confused testimony of their being to the understanding, escaping the evidence of external sense, we have declined, as rocks whereon any one might otherwise easily make shipwreck of his sensible knowledge." His practice, however, does not always exactly square with these professions. Take for example a portion of his demonstration of the existence of atoms, or, as he chooses to call them, *minimas*. "Is not time composed out of instants united, and motion out of spurts joined to

one another? That there are instants and spurts the operations of angels do confirm to us." This is hardly keeping within the province of the senses. Nor is what follows in the most matter-of-fact style;—in grinding any substance, if you continue the operation beyond a certain point, "you shall sooner," says our author, "grind it into clods and bigger pieces than lesser; the reason is, because nature is irritated by the violence and heat of grinding to call the air to its assistance, which glueth its body again together."\* The historical deduction of the created universe from the original chaos, and much argumentation that follows touching the essential qualities and forms of things, may be passed over. But we may abridge a speculation about the phenomena of drowning which occurs in one of the chapters. The true reason, we are told, had never before been laid down by any, why "a man yet living, or any other creature when alive, is much heavier than when he is dead." That such is the fact, in the first place, is assumed from a living man sinking at first when he falls into the water, and rising again to the top after he has been dead for some time. "The reason is," proceeds our philosopher, "because, through the great heat which was inherent in that man, the heavy and terrestrial parts were the more detained from the centre; they, again, being thus detained, moved stronger towards the centre, and therefore make the body heavier during their violent detention, through the great heat which was in the said man when alive; so that, through this great weight, the alive body sinks down to the bottom. Now, when a man is suffocated, and the heat squeezed out of him by the thick

\* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 29.

compressing parts of the water, then he is rendered less heavy, and immediately leaves the inferior parts of water, ~~as~~ being less weighty than the said profound parts." So that we see one principle of Dr. Gideon Harvey's philosophy is, that weight is partly occasioned by heat—that the same substance is heavier or lighter according as it is hotter or colder. The further explanation, in the like strain, of the reasons that nevertheless detain the body below for a considerable time after it may be supposed to have become as cold as the pressure of the water can well make it, need not be quoted at length:—there still remain, it seems, certain "airy and fiery parts," after the vital flame has been extinguished, which it requires in most cases some days to overcome. A strong, compact, well-set man will be eight or nine days in ascending to the top, "because his heat was deeper, and in greater quantity impacted into his body;" and for the same reason, it is affirmed, such a man will sink sooner to the bottom, vanishing under water in the twinkling of an eye. "On the contrary," continues our author, "we hear how that weak and tender women have fallen into the river, and have swam upon the water until watermen have rowed to them, and have taken them up; and many weakly women, that were suspected to be witches, being cast into the water for a trial, have been wickedly and wrongfully adjudged to be witches because they were long in sinking; and, alas, it is natural: the reason was, because they were comparatively light; for their earthy parts were not so much detained, and consequently moved not so forcibly downwards." "No doubt," it is added, with *naïveté* enough, "but their coats conduced also somewhat to it." "Whence I collect," concludes

the demonstration, “that an ordinary woman is almost one-third longer descending to the bottom than an ordinary man, because a man, from being a third stronger (because he is a third heavier through the force of the light elements—but I mean not through fat or corpulency) than a woman, is conjectured to have one-third more heat than a woman.”\* But, if a woman has less heat than a man, she is, in the worthy doctor’s opinion, still more decidedly his inferior in other respects, what heat she has, it should seem, being, after all, too much for the weakness of her general organization. “Women,” he afterwards observes, “die faster, that is, thicker than men, and are more disposed to sickness than they, because their innate heat and air do effect greater alterations upon their bodies, as having but little earth or compressing density, in comparison to men, to resist the light elements and moderate their irruptions; and, therefore, women seldom reach to any equal or consistent temperature, but are always in changing, which in them after eighteen, twenty, or twenty-four years’ expiration is particularly called *breaking*, because then they alter so fast that they swiftly put a period to their days; and that, because their bodies being lax and porous, their innate heat shoots through in particles, and not in *minimas*, without which there can be no durable temperature. Were their bodies heavier and denser, the *minimas* of earth would divide their heat into *minimas*, and reduce it to a temperature. If, then, their innate heat doth constantly cohere in particles, and is never directed into *minimas*, it retaining in that case stronger force than otherwise it could do in *minimas*, it alterates their bodies

\* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 106.

continually, and so they never attain to any consistency of age. Many sexagenarian widowers, or men of three-score years of age, do alter less and slower than most women do from their five-and-thirtieth year; wherefore they do rather covet a wife of twenty, because she will just last as long in her prime, or will be as fast in breaking, altering, and changing her temperament, form, and shape in one year as the old man shall alter or change in three or four years; and so they [the old man and his young wife] grow deformed in equal time. Wherefore a man's consistent age may last out the beauties of two or three women, one after the other; and, because of this, some in their mirth have proclaimed a woman after her thirty-fifth year to be fitter for an hospital than to continue a wife. No wonder if a woman be more fierce, furious, and of a more rash, swift judgment than a man; for their spirits and heat, moving in great troops and confluences of particles, must needs move swift, which swiftness of motion is the cause of their sudden rages, nimble tongues, and rash wits, &c. &c."\* But our fair readers have probably had enough of this. From many other curious things in the multifarious miscellany, which comprises chemistry, botany, mineralogy, and other subjects besides those now usually included under the name of natural philosophy, we will transcribe a few sentences from what is laid down in various places on the matters that had most engaged the attention of inquirers for more than a century preceding the time of this writer, and in the elucidation of which the greatest progress had been made by Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Des Cartes, and some of his own countrymen. The "old fancy of Py-

\* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 134.

thagoras, Plato, Aristarchus, Seleucus, Niceta, and others," the making the earth revolve around the sun, which had been in modern times revived by Copernicus, we have already seen that our author treats as a very absurd notion. "The earth is," he says, "and must necessarily be, the centre of the world, or of all the other elements, within which it is contained like the yolk of an egg within the white and the shell. I prove the proposition: if the nature of earth be to move conically from the circumference to its own centre through a contiguous gravity, and the nature of air and fire be to be equally diffused from the centre through their levity, *ergo*, the earth must needs fall to the midst of them all, its parts tending circularly and conically to their centre. The earth being arrived to the centre, it resteth quiet and immovable."\* As for the position that the sun is the centre of the system, besides that it is in manifest contradiction to the language of Scripture, it cannot be true, we are told, for this, among other reasons:—"The sun is accounted by most, and proved by us, to be a fiery body, or a flame, and therefore is incapable of attaining to rest in a restless region, which, if it did, its flame would soon diminish through the continual rushing by of the fiery element, tearing its flames into a thousand parts, whose effects would certainly prove destructive to the whole universe, but especially to all living creatures." "The moon," it is added, "is liker (if any) to be the centre, it consisting by far of more earth than the sun, as her minority in body, motion, and degree of brightness do testify."† Our author objects, moreover,

\* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 206.

† Id. p. 208.

to the motion assigned to the earth by the Copernican hypothesis on a variety of grounds. In particular, he argues, it is incredibly rapid for so large and heavy a body. Again, "were the earth a planet or star," he observes, "it is supposed it should cast a light, which is repugnant to its nature, through which, as I have showed before, she is rendered dark, and is the cause of all darkness. Were this absurdity admitted, all our knowledge which hitherto wise men have so laboured to accomplish would be in vain; for, as I said before, earth and earthly bodies must be light, fire and fiery bodies must be heavy, and enjoy their rest; water and waterish bodies must be likewise heavy; the air and airy bodies must be weighty, and enjoy their rest; . . . . all dark colours must be supposed light; all astronomical appearances, shadows; sounds, tastes, scents, and all mixed bodies must then be understood to be contrary to what really they are." In fine, he concludes, after quoting some passages to show that Scripture likewise, as well as common sense, is plain against the earth's motion, "what need there more words to confute so absurd an opinion?"\* In a subsequent chapter on the tides, he objects altogether to the imagination entertained by Des Cartes, of the sun and moon having anything to do with that phenomenon. "I deny," he says, in the first place, "his supposition of the earth's motion, as being fabulous, which we have confuted elsewhere. He might as well assert that there be as many Neptunes under water moving it circularly, as Aristotle stated intelligences to move the heavens; for even this he might excuse by saying it was but an assumption to prove a phenomenon of the water." "Can any one rationally or probably conceive,"

\* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 209.

again he indignantly asks, “that the sun, much less the moon, being so remote, and whose forcible effects are so little felt by sublunary bodies, should be capable of driving so deep, so large, and so heavy a body as the ocean, which is as powerful to resist through its extreme gravity as all the celestial bodies are potent to move through their extreme lightness? What, because the ocean and the moon move one way, therefore the one must either follow or move the other? What, can a passion so durable and constant, and so equal, depend upon a violent cause? . . . Such fancies are ridiculous, and not to be proposed by any philosopher.”\* The reason why the greatest height of the waters happens at full moon he conceives to be simply “because the ocean began its course at that instant when the moon after her creation, being placed in opposition to the sun, began hers.”† His own explanation of the cause of the tides is, that they are occasioned in some way or other, which he takes great pains, but not to much purpose, to investigate, by the force of their own gravity periodically drawing the waters of the ocean downward: “the waters,” he says, “take the beginning of their motion underneath not far from the ground, where their being pressed by the great weight of many hundred fathoms of water lying upon them must needs cause a very swift course of waters removing underneath and withdrawing from that of the surface, which is prevented by a swift motion, because it sinks down to that place whence the subjected parts do withdraw themselves; which gives us a reason why the superficial parts of the sea do not flow by many degrees so swift as the subjected ones.”‡ In another chapter:

\* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 303.

† Id. p. 305.      ‡ Id., p. 306.

he takes up the question of the relative magnitudes of the earth, the sun, and the other heavenly bodies ; setting out by asserting that “ the body of the sun is by far exceeded in mole and bigness by the weighty globe ”\* (that is, by this earth). But what he calls his proofs of this proposition need not be inflicted upon the reader.

## THE ROYAL SOCIETY.

Such were the notions in science which prevailed, probably among the generality even of persons of education and reading, in England at the date of the incorporation and first public establishment of the Royal Society. The origin of this institution is traced to about the year 1645, when, on the suggestion of Mr. Theodore Haak, a native of the Palatinate, a number of persons resident in London, who took an interest in what was called the new or experimental philosophy, began to meet together once a week, sometimes at the lodgings of one of their number, Dr. Jonathan Goddard, a physician, in Wood-street, who kept an operator in his house for grinding glasses for telescopes ; sometimes at apartments in Cheapside, sometimes in Gresham College or its neighbourhood. Such is the account given by Dr. Birch, on the authority of Dr. John Wallis, the eminent mathematician, who was himself a member of the association thus formed.† Besides Wallis, Haak, and Goddard, it included Dr. Wil-

\* *Arch. Philos. Nova*, Part ii. p. 417.

† *History of the Royal Society of London*, 1756 ; i. 1. Dr. Birch refers to Dr. Wallis's account of his own Life in the Preface to Hearne's edition of Langtoft's Chronicle, i. 161. What is here called an account of his life is a letter from Wallis to his friend Dr. Thomas Smith.

kins (afterwards Bishop of Chester, and the author of several curious scientific projects and speculations), Dr. George Ent (the friend of Harvey, and defender of his great discovery), Dr. Glisson, already mentioned, Dr. Christopher Merret, who afterwards distinguished himself by his experimental investigations, Mr. Samuel Foster, professor of astronomy in Gresham College, and several others whose names have not been recorded. "Their business was," says Birch, "precluding affairs of state and questions of theology, to consider and discuss philosophical subjects, and whatever had any connexion with or relation to them—as physic, anatomy, geometry, astronomy, navigation, statics, magnetism, chemistry, mechanics, and natural experiments, with the state of these studies as then cultivated at home or abroad." In some letters written in 1646 and 1647 we find the Honourable Robert Boyle, then a very young man, making mention of what he calls "our new Philosophical or Invisible College," by which he is supposed to mean this association. Wilkins, Wallis, and Goddard were all withdrawn to Oxford by being appointed to offices in the university in the course of the years 1648, 1649, and 1651; and by their exertions a society similar to the London one was now established in that city, which was joined by Dr. Seth Ward, then Savilian professor of astronomy, afterwards successively Bishop of Exeter and Salisbury, by Dr. Ralph Bathurst, Dr. Thomas Willis, Dr. (afterwards Sir) William Petty (all physicians), and divers others. The Oxford society met at first in Dr. Petty's lodgings, in the house of an apothecary, whose boxes and phials furnished them with many of the chemical substances they wanted for inspection or experi-

ment; after Petty went to Ireland in September, 1652, the meetings seem to have been discontinued for some years; but in February, 1658, we find Petty, in a letter from Dublin to Boyle, observing that he had not heard better news than that the club was restored at Oxford; and shortly before that date the members appear to have, in fact, begun to assemble again at Dr. Wilkins's apartments in Wadham College, whence, on the appointment of Wilkins, in September, 1659, to the mastership of Trinity College, Cambridge, they transferred themselves to the lodgings of Mr. Boyle, who had come to Oxford in June, 1654, and continued to reside there till April, 1668. All this while the original London society is believed to have met once or twice a week for the greater part of the year without interruption, those of the members who had removed to Oxford rejoining it whenever they chanced to come up to town. In course of time many of the members of the Oxford club became resident in London; and it is certain that, by the year 1659, the meetings had come to be held pretty regularly in term time at Gresham College every week, either after the Wednesday's lecture on astronomy by Wren, or after the Thursday's on geometry by Mr. Lawrence Rooke, sometimes, perhaps, on both days. Among the members at this time are mentioned Lord Brouncker and John Evelyn. The confusion in which public affairs were involved in the latter part of the year 1659, when Gresham College was turned into a barrack for soldiers, dispersed the philosophers; but "their meetings," continues their historian, "were revived, and attended with a larger concourse of persons, eminent for their characters and learning, upon the Restoration, 1660; and,

as appears from the journal book of the Royal Society, on the 28th of November that year, the Lord Viscount Brouncker, Mr. Boyle, Mr. Bruce, Sir Robert Moray, Sir Paul Neile, Dr. Wilkins, Dr. Goddard, Dr. Petty, Mr. Balle, Mr. Rooke, Mr. Wren, and Mr. Hill, after the lecture of Mr. Wren at Gresham College, withdrew for mutual conversation into Mr. Rooke's apartment, where, amongst other matters discoursed of, something was offered about a design of founding a college for the promoting of physico-mathematical experimental learning. And, because they had these frequent occasions of meeting with one another, it was proposed that some course might be thought of to improve this meeting to a more regular way of debating things ; and that, according to the manner in other countries, where there were voluntary associations of men into academies for the advancement of various parts of learning, they might do something answerable here for the promoting of experimental philosophy."\* It was thereupon agreed that the meetings should be continued at three o'clock in the afternoon on every Wednesday, in Mr. Rooke's chamber at Gresham College during term time, and at Mr. Balle's apartments in the Temple in the vacation. It was also arranged that every member of the society should pay ten shillings on his admission, and a shilling a week besides so long as he remained a member. At this meeting, which may be regarded as that at which the present Royal Society was actually founded, Dr. Wilkins presided. From the subsequent admissions it appears that only the twelve persons present on this occasion were considered as members ; all others, even those who had

\* Birch, i. 3.

attended the meetings kept before the Restoration, had to be regularly proposed and balloted for. A list, however, was now drawn out of "such persons as were known to those present, and judged by them willing and fit to be joined with them in their design, and who, if they should desire it, might be admitted before any others;" among whom we find the names of Lord Hatton, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Brereton, who had been a member of the old club, Sir Kenelm Digby, Mr. Evelyn, Mr. Slingsbey (another attendant at the meetings before the Restoration), Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Denham, Dr. Ward, Dr. Wallis, Dr. Glisson, Dr. Ent, Dr. Bate (author of the *Elenchus Motuum*), Dr. Willis, Dr. Cowley (the poet), Mr. Ashmole (founder of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford), Mr. Oldenburg (long secretary), &c. At the next meeting, on that day week, Sir Robert Moray informed the members, from the king, that his majesty had been made acquainted with their design, and that he highly approved of it, and would be ready to give it his encouragement. It appears to have been principally through Moray, who held the office of a sort of private secretary to Charles II., that the society acquired and was enabled to keep up its interest at court. Barnet, who knew him well, calls him "the first former of the Royal Society," and adds that "while he lived he was the life and soul of that body." "He was," says the bishop, "the most universally beloved and esteemed by men of all sides and sorts of any man I have ever known in my whole life. He was a pious man, and in the midst of armies and courts he spent many hours a day in devotion, which was in a most elevating strain. He had gone through the easy parts of mathematics, and

knew the history of nature beyond any man I ever yet knew. He had a genius much like Peiriski, as he is described by Gassendi."\* On the 16th of January, 1661, we find the king sending the society two loadstones by Sir Robert Moray, with a message, "that he expected an account from the society of some of the most considerable experiments upon them."† Charles seems to have taken much interest in the society from the first; in the account of the meeting of the 4th of September this year, it is noted that "a proposition of Mr. Hobbes, for finding two mean proportionals between two straight lines given, was delivered into the society by Sir Paul Neile from the king, indorsed with his majesty's own hand, and was ordered to be registered;"‡ and on the 16th of October Sir Robert Moray acquaints the society that he and Sir Paul Neile had kissed the king's hand in their name; on which he was desired to return their most humble thanks to his majesty "for the favour and honour done them, of offering himself to be entered one of their society."§ "When the society first addressed themselves to his majesty," Bishop Spratt tells us, "he was pleased to express much satisfaction that this enterprise was begun in his reign. He then represented to them the gravity and difficulty of their work; and assured them of all the kind influence of his power and prerogative. Since that he has frequently committed many things to their search; he has referred many foreign rarities to their inspection; he has recommended many domestic improvements to their care; he has demanded the result of their trials in many appearances of nature;

\* Own Time, i. 59.

‡ Id. p. 42.

† Birch, i. 10.

§ Id. p. 50.

he has been present, and assisted with his own hands, at the performing of many of their experiments, in his gardens, his parks, and on the river."\* On the 15th of July, 1662, a charter was passed incorporating the society under the name of the Royal Society, and constituting William Lord Brouncker the first president; Murray, Boyle, Brereton, Digby, Neile, Slingsbey, Petty, Drs. Wallis, Timothy Clarke, Wilkins, and Ent, William Areskine, Esq., cup-bearer to his majesty, Drs. Goddard and Christopher Wren, William Balle, Esq., Matthew Wren, Esq., Evelyn, T. Henshaw, Esq., Dudley Palmer, Esq., and Oldenburg, the first council; Balle, the first treasurer; and Wilkins and Oldenburg the first secretaries. And some additional privileges were granted by a second charter which passed the privy seal on the 22nd of April, 1663.† From a list drawn up on the 21st of May, in that year, it appears that the number of members was then a hundred and fifteen.‡ Among them, besides the names that have been already mentioned, are those of James Lord Annesley, John Aubrey, Esquire (the author of the *Miscellanies*), George Duke of Buckingham, George Lord Berkeley, Robert Lord Bruce, Isaac Barrow, B.D., Walter Lord Cavendish, Dr. Walter Charleton, John Earl of Crawford and Lindsay, Henry Marquis of Dorchester, William Earl of Devonshire, John Dryden, Esquire (the poet), John Graunt, Esquire (author of the *Observations upon the Bills of Mortality*), Mr. Robert Hooke

\* *History of the Royal Society*, Lond. 1667, p. 133.

† See the first Charter in Birch, i. 88—96; the second, 221—230.

‡ Birch, i. 239.

(already a very active member, although the only one whose name stands thus undecorated by any designation either civil or academic), Alexander Earl of Kincardine, John Lord Lucas, John Viscount Massareene, James Earl of Northampton, Dr. Walter Pope (author of the well-known song called the Old Man's Wish, and other pieces of verse), Edward Earl of Sandwich, Thomas Spratt, M.A. (afterwards Bishop of Rochester), Edmund Waller, Esquire (the poet). The Royal Society, we thus perceive, besides the array of titled names which it doubtless owed in part to the patronage of the court, had at this time to boast of a considerable sprinkling of the cultivators of poetry and general literature among its men of science and experimentalists.\* It had however been specially constituted for the promotion of natural or physical science : *Regalis Societas Londini pro scientia naturali promovenda*, or the Royal Society of London for improving natural knowledge, is the full title by which it is described in the second royal charter, and in the English oath therein directed to be taken by the president.†

\* On the 7th of December, 1664, "it being suggested that there were several persons of the society whose genius was very proper and inclined to improve the English tongue, and particularly for philosophical purposes, it was voted that there be a committee for improving the English language, and that they meet at Sir Peter Wyche's lodgings in Gray's Inn once or twice a month, and give an account of their proceedings to the society when called upon." A committee of twenty-one members was accordingly appointed for this purpose: among them were Dryden, Evelyn, Spratt, and Waller.—*Birch*, i. 499, 500.

† In the first Charter it is called simply the Royal Society (*Regalis Societas*); but its object is there still farther limited to mere experimental science—"ad rerum naturalium artiumque utilium scientias experimentorum fide ulterius promovendas."

We have a curious account of the Royal Society at this early date from Louis XIV.'s historiographer, M. Samuel Sorbiere, who came over to this country in 1663, and after his return to France published a narrative of his adventures.\* Sorbiere's book is on the whole a somewhat *excomical* performance, and, of course, in a hastily written description of a foreign country, in which he spent only a few months, he has made several mistakes as to matters of fact; but he may be trusted at least for the outside appearances of things which he saw with his own eyes, and which he evidently does not intend to misrepresent. One of his principal objects in visiting England, he states, was to renew his acquaintance with some old friends, and to be introduced to other learned persons here. One of those whom he had formerly known was Mr. Hobbes, whom, he tells us, he found much the same man as he had seen him fourteen years before, "and even," he adds, "in the same posture in his chamber as he was wont to be every afternoon, wherein he betook himself to his studies after he had been walking about all the morning. This he did for his health, of which he ought to have the greatest regard, he being at this time seventy-eight years of age. Besides which he plays so long at tennis once a week till he is quite tired. I found very little alteration in his face, and none at all in the vigour of his mind, strength of memory, and cheerfulness of spirit; all which he perfectly retained."† Hobbes,

\* *Relation d'un Voyage en Angleterre*, 1664: translated under the title of 'A Voyage to England, containing many things relating to the state of learning, religion, and other curiosities of that kingdom,' 1709.

† English Translation, p. 27.

who in fact was at this time no more than seventy-five, and who lived and wrote for sixteen or seventeen years longer, had already involved himself in his famous mathematical controversy with Dr. Wallis and the new society, which speedily became so angry and scurrilous on both sides—especially on that of Hobbes, who was in the wrong; but it does not appear either that Sorbiere was prepossessed against the society, or they against him in the first instance, by his connexion with their great assailant. Perhaps, however, the circumstance was remembered afterwards, when some of the more zealous members found themselves dissatisfied with the Frenchman's published narrative, and Spratt, already the appointed historian of the society, and vain of his reputation as the finest or smartest writer of the day, undertook the task of exposing its blunders and calumnies.\* The society elected Sorbiere a member while he was in England; and he on his part speaks with great respect both of the society as a body and of those of its members whom he has occasion to mention. Of Sir Robert Moray, he says, "It was a wonderful, or rather a very edifying thing, to find a person employed in matters of state, and of such excellent merit, and one who had been engaged a great part of his life in warlike commands and the affairs of the cabinet, apply himself in making machines in St. James's Park and adjusting telescopes. All this we have seen him do with great application. . . . I made him frequent visits, very much to my satisfaction, having never had the honour to see him but I learned something of him." He adds,

\* *Observations on M. de Sorbiere's Voyage into England; written to Dr. Wren, professor of astronomy in Oxford, 1708 (first printed in 1665).*

“ He was so kind as to introduce me to Prince Rupert, who is of the same frank temper, kind, modest, very curious, and takes no state upon him. . . . Sir Robert Moray brought me likewise into the king’s presence, who is a lover of the curiosities of art and nature. He took the pains to bring me into the Royal Society, and had the goodness, almost every time that I attended there, to seat me next himself, that so he might interpret to me whatever was said in English.”\* An account is afterwards given of the origin of the Royal Society, in which we are told that during the late civil war “ persons of quality, having no court to make, applied themselves to their studies ; some turning their heads to chemistry, others to mechanism, mathematics, or natural philosophy.” “ Those same persons,” proceeds our author, “ who had found their account in their respective studies, would not, after the king’s return. . . . be guilty of so much ingratitude as to leave them and take upon them an idle court life ; but they chose rather to intersperse these sorts of entertainments with their other diversions ; and so the Lords Digby, Boyle, Brouncker, Moray, Devonshire, Worcester, and divers others (for the English nobility are all of them learned and polite), built elaboratories, made machines, opened mines, and made use of an hundred sorts of artists to find out some new invention or other. The king himself is not devoid of this curiosity ; nay, he has caused a famous chymist to be brought over from Paris, for whom he has built a very fine elaboratory in St. James’s Park. But his majesty more particularly takes great delight in finding out useful experiments in navigation, wherein he has immense knowledge.”† He then notices with great

\* English Translation, p. 31.

† Id., p. 33.

admiration Boyle's pneumatic engine, or air-pump, and other inventions of some of the members of the Royal Society. He states, by mistake, that the society had already begun a library adjoining to the gallery through which they passed from their hall of meeting in Gresham College: "they have as yet no library," Spratt observes, "but only a repository for their instruments and rarities."\* Spratt is scandalised at the triviality of the description given of the meetings of the society; but the "mean circumstances," the enumeration of which he denounces as unworthy of so noble a theme, are interesting enough at this distance of time. First is noticed the usher or beadle, "who goes before the president with a mace, which he lays down on the table when the society have taken their places:" this is the gilt silver mace the society still possess, the gift of their first royal patron. It is said to be the same which was formerly used in the House of Commons, and which was removed from the table by one of the soldiers on Cromwell's order to "take away that bauble," when he came down and turned out the remnant of the Long Parliament on the famous 20th of April, 1653. "The room where the society meets," the account goes on, "is large and wainscoted; there is a large table before the chimney, with seven or eight chairs covered with green cloth about it, and two rows of wooden and matted benches to lean on, the first being higher than the other, in form like an amphitheatre. The president and council are elective; they mind no precedence in the society, but the president sits at the middle of the table in an elbow chair, with his back to the chimney. The secretary sits at the end of the table on his left hand, and

\* *Observations*, p. 166.

they have each of them pen, ink, and paper before them. I saw nobody sit on the chairs ; I think they are reserved for persons of great quality, or those who have occasion to draw near to the president. All the other members take their places as they think fit, and without any ceremony ; and, if any one comes in after the society is fixed, nobody stirs, but he takes a place presently where he can find it, that so no interruption may be given to him that speaks. The president has a little wooden mace in his hand, with which he strikes the table when he would command silence ; they address their discourse to him bareheaded till he makes a sign for them to put on their hats ; and there is a relation given in a few words of what is thought proper to be said concerning the experiments proposed by the secretary. There is nobody here eager to speak, that makes a long harangue, or intent upon saying all he knows ; he is never interrupted that speaks, and differences of opinion cause no manner of resentment, nor as much as a disobligeing way of speech ; there is nothing seemed to me to be more civil, respectful, and better managed than this meeting ; and, if there are any private discourses held between any while a member is speaking, they only whisper, and the least sign from the president causes a sudden stop, though they have not told their mind out. I took special notice of this conduct in a body consisting of so many persons, and of such different nations.... In short, it cannot be discerned that any authority prevails here ; and, whereas those who are mere mathematicians favour Des Cartes more than Gassendus, the *literati*, on the other side, are more inclined to the latter. But both of them have hitherto demeaned themselves with so much moderation that no different hypotheses or principles have been a means to break in upon the good h<sup>r</sup>

mony of the society.”\* Spratt takes fire at this statement about the authority of Descartes with the mathematicians and of Gassendi with the men of general learning: “neither of these two men,” he says, “bear any sway amongst them; they are never named there as dictators over men’s reasons; nor is there any extraordinary reference to their judgments.”†

The Royal Society began to publish the most important of the papers communicated to it, under the title of the *Philosophical Transactions*, in March, 1665; and the work has been continued from that date to the present day, with the exception of the four years from January, 1679, to January, 1683 (for which space the deficiency is partly supplied by Hooke’s volume of *Philosophical Collections*), of the three years and a month from December, 1687, to January, 1691, and of various shorter intervals, amounting in all to nearly a year and a half more, previous to October, 1695. From this work, or either of its abridgments—the first begun by Mr. Lowthorp and brought down by a succession of continuators to the middle of last century; the second, and best, by the late Dr. Charles Hutton and assistants, extending to the year 1800—and from the histories of Bishop Spratt and Dr. Birch, the former, however, coming down only to the year 1667, in which it was published—may be learned the general character of the inquiries with which the Royal Society occupied itself in the earlier stage of its existence, and which, we may hence infer, formed the kind of science at that time chiefly cultivated in this country. It will be found that mathematical and analytical investigations then bore an extremely small propor-

\* English Translation, p. 38.

† *Observations*, p. 165.

tion to the bulk of the business at the society's meetings ; which indeed did not consist much of mere speculation of any kind, but rather of exhibitions and experiments, of details as to the useful arts, accounts of new inventions, communications of remarkable facts, phenomena, and incidents in natural history, chemistry, medicine, and anatomy,—of a great deal, indeed, that would now probably be accounted to belong only to the curiosities or popular pastimes of science. A list drawn up 30th March, 1664, presents the members as then distributed into the following seven committees (besides an eighth for correspondence) : 1. Mechanical, to consider and improve all mechanical inventions ; 2. Astronomical and optical ; 3. Anatomical ; 4. Chemical ; 5. Georgical ; 6. For histories of trades ; 7. For collecting all the phenomena of nature hitherto observed, and all experiments made and recorded.\* Here we have no mention at all of either mathematical or algebraical science ; the cultivation of these branches separately, or for their own sake, does not seem to have then been considered as coming within the design of the society. Nor were they extensively applied even in mechanical, astronomical, and optical investigations. If we take up the first volume of Hutton's abridgment of the Philosophical Transactions, which comprises the first seven volumes of the original publication, extending over seven years, from 1665 to 1672 inclusive, we shall find that of about 450 communications (besides nearly 200 reviews of books), only nine come under the heads of algebra and geometry, or pure science ; that of about 140 relating to mechanical philosophy, and arranged under the heads of dynamics, astronomy, chrono-

\* Birch, i. 406, 407.

logy, navigation, gunnery, hydraulics, pneumatics, optics, electricity, magnetism, pyrotechny, thermometry, &c., nine in every ten are mere accounts of observations and experiments, or explanations and hypotheses in which there is little or no mathematics ; and that the remaining 300, or two-thirds of the whole, belong to the departments of natural history (divided into zoology, botany, mineralogy, geography, and hydrology), of chemical philosophy (divided into chemistry, meteorology, and geology), of physiology (divided into physiology of animals, physiology of plants, medicine, surgery, and anatomy), and of the arts (divided into mechanical, chemical, and the fine arts).\* So that at this time only about one paper in fifty was purely mathematical or analytical, and only one in three on subjects to which the science of lines and quantities was applicable—for chemistry was not yet in a condition to be treated otherwise than tentatively, and, if mathematical reasoning had been attempted in medicine, the attempt was a failure and a folly.

The history of the Royal Society, however, is very nearly the whole history of English science, both physical and mathematical, from the date of its institution to the end of the seventeenth century. Almost all the scientific discoveries and improvements that originated in this country during that century were made by its members, and a large proportion of them are recorded and were first published in its *Transactions*. But the Royal Society, it is to be remembered, was, after all, still more an effect than a cause, still more an indication

\* In Hutton's table of contents a few papers are repeated under different heads, but this cannot much affect the calculation.

than a power ; and, although it no doubt gave an impulse to the progress of science by the communication and union which it helped to maintain among the labourers in that field, by some advantages which it derived from its position, and by the spirit which it excited and diffused, the advance which was made under its auspices, or partly by force of its example, would probably have been accomplished little less rapidly without its assistance ; for the time was come, and the men with it, who assuredly would not have been hindered from doing their work, although such an institution had never been called into existence. But it was part of the work they were sent to do to establish such an institution, which, although not the tree on which science grows, is both a convenient and ornamental shelter for the gathered fruit, and may be made serviceable for various subsidiary purposes which even philosophers are entitled to hold in some regard in a refined and luxurious age.

## THE STEAM-ENGINE.

One invention, dating after the Restoration, of which much has been said in recent times, is assigned to an individual whose name does not occur in the roll of the members of the Royal Society—the first steam-engine, which is commonly believed to have been both described and constructed by the Marquess of Worcester—the same whose negotiations with the Irish Catholics, when he was Earl of Glamorgan, make so remarkable a passage in the history of the contest between Charles I. and the parliament. The Marquess of Worcester's famous publication entitled ' A Century of the names and scantlings

of such inventions as at present I can call to mind to have tried and perfected (my former notes being lost), &c.,' was first printed in 1663. "It is a very small piece," says Walpole, "containing a dedication to Charles II. ; another to both Houses of Parliament, in which he affirms having in the presence of Charles I. performed many of the feats mentioned in his book ; a table of contents ; and the work itself, which is but a table of contents neither, being a list of a hundred projects, most of them impossibilities, but all of which he affirms having discovered the art of performing. Some of the easiest seem to be, how to write with a single line ; with a point ; how to use all the senses indifferently for each other, as, to talk by colours, and to read by the taste ; to make an unsinkable ship ; how to do and to prevent the same thing ; how to sail against wind and tide ; how to form an universal character ; how to converse by jangling bells out of tune ; how to take towns or prevent their being taken ; how to write in the dark ; how to cheat with dice ; and, in short, how to fly."\* "Of all these wonderful inventions," adds Walpole, "the last but one seems the only one of which his lordship has left the secret ;" but the wit, who characterises the whole production as "an amazing piece of folly," has missed the most interesting of all the marquess's projects, the sixtieth in the list, which he entitles "An admirable and most forcible way to drive up water by fire," and which appears from his description to have been, in fact, a species of steam-engine. His language implies, too, that the idea had been actually carried into effect : he speaks of having made use of a cannon for his boiler ; and he

\* Royal and Noble Authors.

says, “ I have seen the water run like a constant fountain-stream forty feet high ; one vessel of water rarefied by fire driveth up forty of cold water.” And Sorbiere, when here in 1663, appears to have seen the engine at work—although the superficial, chattering Frenchman has described it, and probably understood it, so imperfectly as to have taken no note even of the nature of the power by which it was made to act :—“ One of the most curious things I had a mind to see,” he writes, “ was a water-engine invented by the Marquess of Worcester, of which he had made an experiment. I went on purpose to see it at Fox Hall (Vauxhall), on the other side of the Thames, a little above Lambeth, the Archbishop of Canterbury’s palace, standing in sight of London. One man, by the help of this machine, raised four large buckets full of water in an instant forty feet high, and that through a pipe of about eight inches long ; which invention will be of greater use to the public than that very ingenious machine already made use of, and raised upon wooden work above Somerset House, that supplies part of the town with water, but with great difficulty, and in less quantity than could be wished.”\* Forty years before the publication of the *Century of Inventions*, it is to be observed, a French engineer, Solomon de Caus, in a volume published at Paris entitled ‘ *Les Raisons des Forces Mouvantes*,’ had not only called attention to the power of steam produced in a close vessel, but had proposed a mode of raising water by means of such a force, the principle of which, as far as can be collected, appears to have been the same with that of the Marquess of Worcester’s contrivance. It is possible that the marquess may have taken the idea from this book, which

\* *Journey to England*, p. 29.

would be the more likely to attract attention in England from the circumstance of De Caus having come over to this country in 1612 in the train of the Elector Palatine, and resided here for some years; but still the English nobleman remains, as far as is known, the first person who ever actually constructed a steam-engine, supposing the water-engine seen by Sorbiere to have been such. Twenty years later, as appears from the author's manuscript now in the British Museum, the same idea that had been already published by De Caus, and realised by the Marquess of Worcester, was proposed as his own by Sir Samuel Morland in a work on machines for raising water, written in French, and addressed to Louis XIV.\*; although the passage was omitted from the book when it was soon afterwards sent to the press. About 1690, Denis Papin, a native of France, but then and for a great part of his life resident in this country, discovered and applied the two important improvements of making the expansive force of the steam act by means of a piston and of producing a reaction of the piston through the condensation of the steam by means of cold; he is also the inventor of the safety-valve, which, however, he only applied in the cooking apparatus called his digester, where steam was employed merely to produce heat, not in any machine where that agent was the moving power. In 1698 Captain Savery contrived the first steam-engine which can be said to have been found practically useful; he employed the principle of the condensation of the steam by cold not to permit the relapse of a piston, as Papin had done, but to effect the elevation of the water directly by allowing it to ascend into the vacuum so produced. From this date steam may be considered to have

\* Recueil de Machines pour l'Elévation des Eaux, &c.

ranked as an important working power in this country, although Savery's engine was never applied to any other purpose except the raising of water, which, too, it could only effect from a very inconsiderable depth, the vacuum, by means of which it principally operated, ceasing to act as soon as the column of water came to balance an atmospheric column of the same base, in other words, as soon as the water had ascended through the vacuum to the height of about thirty-two feet. About 1711 a much more effective engine was invented by Thomas Newcomen, an ironmonger of Dartmouth, assisted by John Colley, a glazier of the same place, upon Papin's principle, of making the vacuum produced by the condensation of the steam serve for allowing the descent of a piston under its own gravitation and the pressure of the atmosphere. Newcomen's, or the atmospheric engine, as it has been called, soon came to be extensively employed, especially in the mining districts, where water had often to be raised from great depths. Dr. John Theophilus Desaguliers, a clergyman of the Church of England, but of French birth and extraction, in the year 1718 improved Savery's engine (which from its cheapness has for some purposes continued in use to our own day) by substituting the injection of a small current of cold water into the receiver for the old method of dashing the water over the outside of the vessel to effect the concentration of the steam ; and this same improvement—re-discovered, it is said, by himself—was also soon after applied by Newcomen to his engine. About the same time Mr. Beighton contrived to make the machine itself open and shut the cocks by which it received its alternate supplies of steam and water.

## OTHER DISCOVERIES AND IMPROVEMENTS IN NATURAL AND EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCE.

At the head of the cultivators of experimental science in England in the latter part of the seventeenth century stands the Honourable Robert Boyle, seventh and youngest son of Richard first Earl of Cork, commonly called the Great Earl. He was born in 1627, and lived till 1691. Boyle was an unwearied observer and collector of facts, and also a voluminous speculator, in physical science ; but his actual discoveries do not amount to much. He made considerable improvements on the air-pump, originally invented a few years before by Otto von Guericke of Magdeburg, and indeed it may be said to have been in his hands that it first became an instrument available for the purposes of science. The few additions which Boyle made to our knowledge of general principles, or what are called the laws of nature, were almost confined to the one department of pneumatics ; he is commonly held to have discovered or established the absorbing power of the atmosphere and the propagation of sound by the air ; he proved that element to possess much more both of expansibility and of compressibility than had been previously suspected ; he made some progress towards ascertaining the weight of atmospheric air ; and he showed more clearly than had been done before his time its indispensableness to the sustentation both of combustion and of animal life. He may be regarded, therefore, along with Torricelli, Pascal, and Guericke, as one of the fathers of pneumatic science —in so far at least as it is concerned with the mechanical

properties of the atmosphere. Boyle also ascertained many particular facts, and arrived at some general, though rather vague, conclusions in chemistry, in the course of his multifarious experiments: the practice of applying one chemical agent as a test for detecting the presence of another was first adopted by him; and he exposed the falsehood of the notion then commonly entertained, that whatever could not be destroyed or changed by fire was to be ranked among the elementary constituents of the natural world. In chemical pneumatics, however, little progress was made either by Boyle or for many years after his day. He conjectured, indeed, that only a portion of the atmosphere was employed in sustaining combustion and animal life; and his fellow-labourer Hooke divined that the element in question is the same with that contained in nitre (namely, what is now called oxygen), and that in combustion it combined with the burning body. But neither of these sagacious conclusions was yet experimentally established.

Robert Hooke, born in 1635, was, till his death in 1702, one of the most devoted cultivators of science in this age. Besides his skill and sagacity as a chemist, he had a remarkable quickness and fertility of mechanical invention, and his speculations ranged over the whole field of natural history and natural philosophy, from the minutest disclosures of the microscope to beyond the farthest sweep of the telescope. His jealous and rapacious temper, and sordid personal habits, which made him an object of general dislike in his own day, have probably somewhat stinted the acknowledgment paid to his merits both by his contemporaries and by posterity; and in fact, of numerous inventions and discoveries to

which he himself laid claim, there is scarcely one to which his right has been universally admitted. It is generally allowed, however, that we are indebted to him for the improvement of the pendulum as a measure of time, and for some valuable innovations in the construction of pendulum watches, in particular the application of a spiral spring to regulate the balance. But in his own notion Hooke was the true author of several of the discoveries which have immortalised the greatest of his contemporaries. He disputed partly the originality, partly the truth, of Newton's theory of light; and he even asserted, when the *Principia* came out, that there was little or nothing there announced on the force and action of gravitation that he had not himself anticipated. He had, indeed, some years before, in a paper printed in the *Philosophical Transactions*, sketched an hypothesis of the movements of the earth and the other planets on the assumption of the principle of universal gravitation;\* but this was a very different thing from the demonstration of the system of the world by Newton on the establishment and accurate measurement of that force. Newton himself eventually admitted that his proposition of the gravitation of the planets being as the inverse square of the distance had been previously deduced from Kepler's discovery of their elliptical orbits by Hooke, as well as by Wren and Halley; but this concession is supposed to have been made rather for the sake of peace than from conviction.

The first president of the Royal Society, William Brouncker, Lord Viscount Brouncker (of the kingdom of Ireland), who was born in 1620 and died in 1684,

\* *Phil. Trans.*, No. 101 (for April, 1674).

was an able mathematician, and is known as the author of the first series invented for the quadrature of the hyperbola, and also as the first writer who noticed what are called continued fractions in arithmetic. Dr. John Wallis (*b.* 1616, *d.* 1703) is the author of many works of great learning, ingenuity, and profoundness on algebra, geometry, and mechanical philosophy. Among the practical subjects to which he devoted himself were the deciphering of secret writing, and the teaching of persons born deaf to speak. “I was informed,” says Sorbiere, “that Dr. Wallis had brought a person that was born deaf and dumb to read at Oxford, by teaching him several inflexions fitted to the organs of his voice, to make it articulate.”\* The French traveller afterwards went to Oxford, and saw and conversed with Wallis (who held the office of Savilian professor of geometry in the university), although he complains that the professor and all the other learned Englishmen he met with spoke Latin, which was his medium of communication with them, with such an accent and way of pronunciation that they were very hard to be understood.† However, he adds that he was much edified, notwithstanding, by Wallis’s conversation; and was mightily pleased both with the experiments he saw made by him in teaching the deaf to read, and with the model of a floor he had invented “that could bear a great weight, and make a very large hall, though it consisted only of several short pieces of timber joined together, without any mortices,

\* Journey to England, p. 28.

† In this matter, “we do,” says Spratt, in his answer, “as all our neighbours besides: we speak the ancient Latin after the same way that we pronounce our mother tongue; so the Germans do, so the Italians, so the French,” p. 159.

nails, and pins, or any other support than what they gave one another ; for the weight they bear closes them so together as if they were but one board, and the floor all of a piece." He gives a diagram of this ingenious floor ; "and indeed," he continues, "I made Mr. Hobbes himself even admire it, though he is at no good terms with Dr. Wallis, and has no reason to love him."\* We have already mentioned the hot war, about what might seem the least heating of all subjects, that was carried on for some years between Wallis and Hobbes. A curious account is afterwards given of Wallis's personal appearance :—" The doctor," says our traveller, " has less in him of the gallant man than Mr. Hobbes ; and, if you should see him with his university cap on his head, as if he had a *porte-feuille* on, covered with black cloth, and sewed to his calot, you would be as much inclined to laugh at this diverting sight as you would be ready to entertain the excellency and civility of my friend [Hobbes] with esteem and affection." And then the coxcomb adds—" What I have said concerning Dr. Wallis is not intended in the least to derogate from the praises due to one of the greatest mathematicians in the world ; and who, being yet no more than forty years of age [he was forty-seven], may advance his studies much farther, and become polite, if purified by the air of the court at London ; for I must tell you, sir, that that of the university stands in need of it, and that those who are not purified otherways have naturally strong breaths that are noxious in conversation."† It may be doubtful whether these last expressions are to be understood literally, or in some metaphorical sense ; for it is not obvious

\* Journey to England, p. 39.

† Ibid., p. 41.

how the air of a court, though it may polish a man's address, is actually to sweeten a bad breath. Dr. Wallis, besides his publication of the papers of Horrocks already noticed, edited several of the works of Archimedes, Ptolemy, and other ancient mathematicians; and he is also the author of a *Grammar of the English tongue*, written in Latin, which abounds in curious and valuable matter.

Another ingenious though somewhat fanciful mathematician of this day was Dr. John Wilkins, who was made Bishop of Chester some years after the Restoration, although during the interregnum he had married a sister of Oliver Cromwell, as Archbishop Tillotson had a niece in the reign of Charles I. Dr. Wilkins is chiefly remembered for his 'Discovery of a New World,' published in 1638, in which he attempts to prove the practicability of a passage to the moon; and his 'Essay towards a Real Character,' being a scheme of a universal language, which he gave to the world thirty years later. He is also the author of various theological works. Of the high mathematical merits of Dr. Isaac Barrow we have already spoken. Barrow's *Lectiones Opticæ*, published in 1669, and his *Lectiones Geometricæ*, 1670, contain his principal contributions to mathematical science. The former advanced the science of optics to the point at which it was taken up by Newton: the latter promulgated a partial anticipation of Newton's differential calculus—what is known by the name of the method of tangents,—and was the simplest and most elegant form to which the principle of fluxions had been reduced previous to the system of Leibnitz. Barrow's *Mathematicæ Lectiones*, not published till after his death, which took

place in 1677, as already mentioned, at the early age of forty-six, are also celebrated for their learning and profoundness. Another person who likewise distinguished himself in this age by his cultivation of mathematical science, although he earned his chief renown in another department, was Sir Christopher Wren. Wren's most important paper in the *Philosophical Transactions* is one on the laws of the collision of bodies, read before the Royal Society in December, 1668.\* It is remarkable that this subject, which had been recommended by the society to the attention of its members, was at the same time completely elucidated by three individuals working without communication with each other:—by Wren in this paper; by Wallis in another, read the preceding month; and by the celebrated Huygens (who had been elected a fellow of the society soon after its establishment), in a third, read in January, 1669.

#### NEWTON.

A greater glory is shed over this than over any other age in the history of the higher sciences by the discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton, the most penetrating and comprehensive intellect which has ever been exerted in that field of speculation. The era of Newton extends to the year 1727, when he died at the age of eighty-five. What he did for science almost justifies the poetical comparison of his appearance among men to the first dispersion of the primeval darkness at the creation of the material world: “God said, Let Newton be, and there was light.” While yet in earliest manhood, he had not only out-

\* In No. 43, p. 867.

stripped and left far behind him the ablest mathematicians and analytic investigators of the day, but had discovered, it may be said, the whole of his new system\* of the world, except only that he had not verified some parts of it by the requisite calculations. The year 1664, when he was only twenty-two, is assigned as the date of his discovery of the Binomial Theorem; the year 1665 as that of his invention of fluxions; the year 1666 as that in which he demonstrated the law of gravitation in regard to the movement of the planets around the sun, and was only prevented from extending it to the movement of the moon around the earth, and to that of bodies falling towards the earth, by the apparent refutation of his hypothesis when attempted to be so applied which was occasioned by the erroneous estimate then received of the earth's diameter. He did not attempt to wrest the supposed facts so as to suit his theory; on the contrary, with a singular superiority to the seductions of mere plausibility, he said nothing of his theory to any one, and seems even to have thought no more of it for sixteen years, till, having heard by chance, at a meeting of the Royal Society in 1682, of Picard's measurement of an arc of the meridian executed three years before, he thence deduced the true length of the earth's diameter, resumed and finished his long abandoned calculation—not without such emotion as compelled him to call in the assistance of a friend as he discerned the approaching confirmation of what he had formerly anticipated—and the following year transmitted to the Royal Society what afterwards formed the leading propositions of the Principia. That work, containing the complete exposition of the new theory of the universe, was published at London, at the

expense of the Royal Society, in 1687. Meanwhile, about the year 1669, he had made his other great discovery of the non-homogeneity of light, and the differing refrangibility of the rays of which it is composed ; by these fundamental facts revolutionising the whole science of optics. His Treatise on Optics, in which these discoveries and their consequences were developed, was first published in 1704 ; and along with it a Latin tract, entitled 'De Quadratura Curvarum,' containing an exposition of the method of fluxions ; of which, however, the Principia had already shown him to be in complete possession twenty years before, and which he had made use of in a paper written, according to his own account, in 1666, and undoubtedly communicated to Dr. Barrow, and by him to Mr. Collins, in 1669. This paper, entitled 'Analysis per aequationes numero terminorum infinitas,' was published in 1711. The question of the invention of the fluxionary or differential calculus, as is well known, gave occasion to a warm and protracted dispute between the partisans of Newton and those of his illustrious continental contemporary, Leibnitz ; but it is now admitted on all hands, that, whatever claim Leibnitz also may have to be accounted its independent inventor (and there can scarcely be a doubt that he has a good claim to be so accounted), the honour of the prior invention belongs to Newton.

JAMES GREGORY, AND OTHER CONTEMPORARIES OF  
NEWTON.

We must dismiss some other distinguished names with a very brief mention. James Gregory, who died in 1675

at the age of only thirty-six, after having been successively Professor of Mathematics at St. Andrews and Edinburgh, had in his short life accomplished more than any of his contemporaries except Newton. He is popularly remembered chiefly as the inventor of the first reflecting telescope; but his geometrical and analytical inventions and discoveries were also numerous, and some of them of the highest order of merit. His nephew, David Gregory, Professor of Mathematics at Edinburgh, and afterwards Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, was also an able mathematician, and published some valuable works on geometry, optics, and astronomy. The Newtonian Theory of universal gravitation is said to have been taught by him at Edinburgh before it was introduced into any other European university. It is remarkable that when this David Gregory died, in 1708, he and two of his brothers held professorships in three British universities —himself at Oxford, James at Edinburgh, and Charles at St. Andrews. The last-mentioned, too, was succeeded, upon his resignation in 1639, by his son, named David. John Collins (*b.* 1624, *d.* 1683) is the author of several practical works and of a good many papers in the Philosophical Transactions; but he was most useful in promoting the publication of the works of others: it is said that Wallis's history of Algebra, Barrow's Optical and Geometrical Lectures, and various other publications owed their seeing the light principally to his instigation and encouragement. He also kept up an extensive epistolary intercourse with the other scientific men of the day: it was principally from the letters and papers he left behind him that the *Commercium Epistolicum*, or volume of correspondence on the invention of fluxions,

published in 1712, was made up. "Many of the discoveries in physical knowledge," says Dr. Hutton, "owe their chief improvement to him; for, while he excited some to disclose every new and useful invention, he employed others in improving them. Sometimes he was peculiarly useful by showing where the defect lay in any branch of science, and pointing out the difficulties attending the inquiry; at other times explaining their advantages, and keeping up a spirit and energy for improvement. In short, Mr. Collins was like the register of all the new acquisitions made in the mathematical sciences; the magazine to which the curious had frequent recourse; which acquired him the appellation of the English Mersenne."\* Roger Cotes died in 1716, at the age of thirty-four, after having, in the estimation of his contemporaries, given promise of becoming one of the greatest mathematicians that had ever existed: Newton himself is reported to have said, "If Cotes had lived we should have known something." Cotes's mathematical papers were published, in 1722, under the title of 'Harmonia Mensurarum,' by his cousin Dr. Robert Smith (author of a work on optics), and his Hydrostatical and Pneumatical Lectures in 1738 by the same editor. Of all the publications that appeared in the early stages of the fluxionary calculus, Professor Playfair conceives that none is more entitled to notice than the 'Harmonia Mensurarum' of Cotes. In this work, he observes, a method of reducing the areas of curves, in cases not admitting of an accurate comparison with rectilinear spaces, to those of the circle and hyperbola, which Newton had exemplified in his *Quadratura Curvarum*, was extended by Cotes, who also

\* Abridg. of Phil. Trans., i. 338.

“gave the rules for finding the fluents of fractional expressions, whether rational or irrational, greatly generalised and highly improved by means of a property of the circle discovered by himself, and justly reckoned among the most remarkable propositions in geometry.”\* Another eminent authority describes the ‘*Harmonia*’ as “the earliest work in which decided progress was made in the application of logarithms, and of the properties of the circle, to the calculus of fluents.”† Cotes superintended the printing of the second edition of Newton’s *Principia*, published in 1713, and prefixed to it a preface which immediately acquired for him a wide scientific reputation. The last of these early English cultivators of the new calculus whom we shall mention is Dr. Brook Taylor, a geometrician and analyst of great profoundness and originality, whose *Methodus Incrementorum*, published in 1715, is characterised by Playfair as having “added a new branch to the analysis of variable quantity.” “A single analytical formula,” Playfair adds, “in the Method of Increments, has conferred a celebrity on its author which the most voluminous works have not often been able to bestow. It is known by the name of Taylor’s Theorem, and expresses the value of any function of a variable quantity in terms of the successive orders of increments, whether finite or infinitely small. If any one proposition can be said to comprehend in it a whole science, it is this: for from it almost every truth and every method of the new analysis may be deduced. It is diffi-

\* *Dissertation on Progress of Math. and Phys. Science*, p. 531.

† *Article on Cotes*, in *Penny Cyclopædia*, viii. 87.

cult to say whether the theorem does most credit to the genius of the author, or the power of the language which is capable of concentrating such a vast body of knowledge in a single expression."\* Taylor's Theorem has since its first announcement been, in the language of the late Professor Leslie, "successively modified, transformed, and extended by Maclaurin, Lagrange, and Laplace, whose names are attached to their respective formulæ."†

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ROYAL OBSERVATORY.

The example and discoveries of Newton, and especially the publication of the *Principia*, had, before the end of the seventeenth century, given a new direction and character to scientific speculation, and even to what was generally understood by the term science, in England. The day of little more than mere virtuosoship, in which the Royal Society had taken its rise and commenced its operations, had given place to that of pure science in its highest forms and most lofty and extensive applications. Next to the development and application of the fluxionary calculus, the field in which, as might have been expected, the impulse given by Newton produced the most brilliant results was that of astronomy. The Royal Observatory at Greenwich was founded by Charles II., for the benefit of astronomy and navigation, in 1676; and the appointment

\* Dissertation, p. 532.

† Dissertation on the Progress of the Math. and Phys. Sciences in the Eighteenth Century, in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, p. 599.

of Astronomer Royal (or Astronomical Observator, in the official style) bestowed upon John Flamsteed, then about thirty years of age, and already distinguished as a cultivator of astronomical science. Flamsteed held this office till his death in 1719; and during that space of time made and published a voluminous series of observations, from the commencement of which his late biographer, Mr. Baily, dates the commencement of modern astronomy. "Nor," observes another writer, to whose masterly contributions to the history of the mathematical sciences we have been repeatedly indebted in the preceding pages, "can such chronology be disputed, if we consider that we now return to Flamsteed's observations as the earliest with which it is desirable to compare those of our day, and also that Flamsteed's Catalogue is the first which attained a precision comparable to that of later times."\* What is here alluded to is a catalogue of above 3300 stars, "whose places," as has been remarked, "were more accurate than any determined in the next fifty years, and whose selection and nomenclature have served as basis to every catalogue since that time."† A portion of this Catalogue was first published, without Flamsteed's consent, in 1712, by a committee appointed by the government, of which Newton, Wren, and Gregory were members, and under the immediate superintendence of Halley, by whose name the work, entitled 'Historiae Cœlestis Libri Duo,' is commonly known. Flamsteed considered himself, and apparently with good

\* Article on Flamsteed, in Penny Cyclopædia, x. 296.

† Article on Greenwich Observatory, in Penny Cyclopædia, xi. 441.

reason, to have been very ill-used in this transaction ;\* and, having at last succeeded in recovering from the government all the copies of Halley's book that remained unsold, he committed them to the flames, with the exception of a portion of the sheets, out of which he formed part of the first volume of a new work, with the title of ' *Historia Cœlestis Britannica*, ' the printing of which, however (in three volumes, folio), was not completed till 1725, six years after the author's death. It was carried through the press by his widow, with the aid of his assistants Mr. Crosthwait and Mr. Abraham Sharp, the latter of whom had attained great distinction as an accurate observer. This work is characterised by the writer of the article on Flamsteed in the *Penny Cyclopædia* as occupying the same place in practical astronomy which the *Principia* of Newton holds in the theoretical part. It was to Flamsteed that Newton (who afterwards quarrelled with his old friend, and abused him in no measured terms, on the misunderstanding that arose about the first publication of his catalogue) was indebted for all the observations of the moon which he made use of in the illustration and verification of his lunar theory. "The first edition of Newton's *Principia*," to quote again the publication just referred to, "had appeared shortly before Flamsteed had supplied himself with his best instruments ; and at Newton's request many of Flamsteed's observations of the moon, reduced as well as was then practica-

\* See the particulars as for the first time brought to light by Mr. Francis Baily in his new edition of ' *The British Catalogue of Stars, corrected and enlarged*, ' with an account of the life of Flamsteed prefixed. Lond. 1835.

ble, were communicated to him to aid in perfecting the theory deduced from the principle of universal gravitation. The time at which these observations were made was in fact a most critical one—when the most accurate observations that had been made were needed for the support of the most extensive philosophical theory that man had invented.”\*

## MEDICAL SCIENCE AND NATURAL HISTORY.

In the English medical science of the latter part of the seventeenth century the most distinguished name is that of Dr. Thomas Sydenham (*b.* 1624, *d.* 1689). Discarding mere theory, Sydenham applied himself to the careful observation of nature and facts; and his practice and writings are considered as marking an era in the history of the healing art. After his time little innovation was made among British practitioners, either in the treatment or doctrine of diseases, till the era of Cullen and Brown in the middle of the succeeding century. Anatomical science from the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century was principally advanced by Malpighi, Steno, Ruysch, Duverney, Morgagni, Albinus, Haller, and other Italian, French, and German physicians; but some new facts were also contributed by Humphrey Ridley, the author of a work on the Brain, published in 1695; by William Cowper, whose Anatomical Tables, published in 1698, however, are asserted to have been stolen from the Dutch anatomist Bidloo; by the eldest Alexander Monro, the

\* Article on Greenwich Observatory, in Penny Cyclopaedia, xi. 441.

author of the *Osteology*, first published in 1726, and the founder of the medical school of Edinburgh; and by the celebrated William Cheselden, author of the *Osteography*, published in 1733, and of various other works, and the most expert English operator of his day. To these names ought to be added that of Stephen Hales, whose '*Vegetable Statics*,' published in 1727, and '*Haemastatics*,' published in 1733, carried both vegetable and animal physiology considerably farther than any preceding work either English or foreign. Something was also done in the new sciences (if they were yet entitled to be so called) of zoology and comparative anatomy, by Nehemiah Grew, Edward Tyson, Samuel Collins, and other early members of the Royal Society. Grew is likewise one of the fathers of modern botany; but that science was indebted for altogether a new form to the famous John Ray, whose various works were published between 1670 and his death in 1705. "Botany," says a late writer, in noticing the merits of Ray, "he found was fast settling back into the chaos of the middle ages, partly beneath the weight of undigested materials, but more from the want of some fixed principles by which the knowledge of the day should be methodised. Profiting by the discoveries of Grew and the other vegetable anatomists, to which he added a great store of original observations, he, in his '*Historia Plantarum*,' the first volume of which appeared in 1686, embodied in one connected series all the facts that had been collected concerning the structure and functions of plants: to these he added an exposition of what he considered the philosophy of classification, as indicated partly by human reason, and partly by experience; and from the whole

he deduced a classification which is unquestionably the basis of that which, under the name of the system of Jussieu, is everywhere recognised at the present day."\* Ray's views, however, were encountered even in his own day by the artificial system of the French botanist Tournefort; and before the middle of the next century the science was again revolutionised by the genius of the great Linnæus. The Botanical, or Physic Garden, as it was called, at Oxford, we may here mention, had been founded and endowed by Henry Danvers, Earl of Danby, in 1632. Ornithology and ichthyology may almost be said to owe their beginning, at least in this country, to Ray's friend, Francis Willughby. Willughby died, at the age of thirty-seven, in 1672, but his works on these subjects—his 'Ornithologiæ Libri Tres,' and his 'Historia Piscium,'—were not published till some years after, under the superintendence of Ray; indeed, of the latter, which did not appear till 1686, Ray was half the author as well as the editor. A similar service was performed to conchology by the magnificent 'Historia Conchyliorum' of Dr. Martin Lister, the first part of which appeared in 1685, the fifth and last in 1693. Finally, in geology, while some progress was made in the collecting and even in the arranging of facts by Ray, Dr. John Woodward, and others, and a few elementary general principles or natural laws of the science were beginning to be perceived, a host of speculators, headed by the eloquent Thomas Burnet and the eccentric William Whiston, both men of genius and learning, but of more fancy than either judgment or knowledge of the subjects which in this instance they undertook to discuss, produced in the

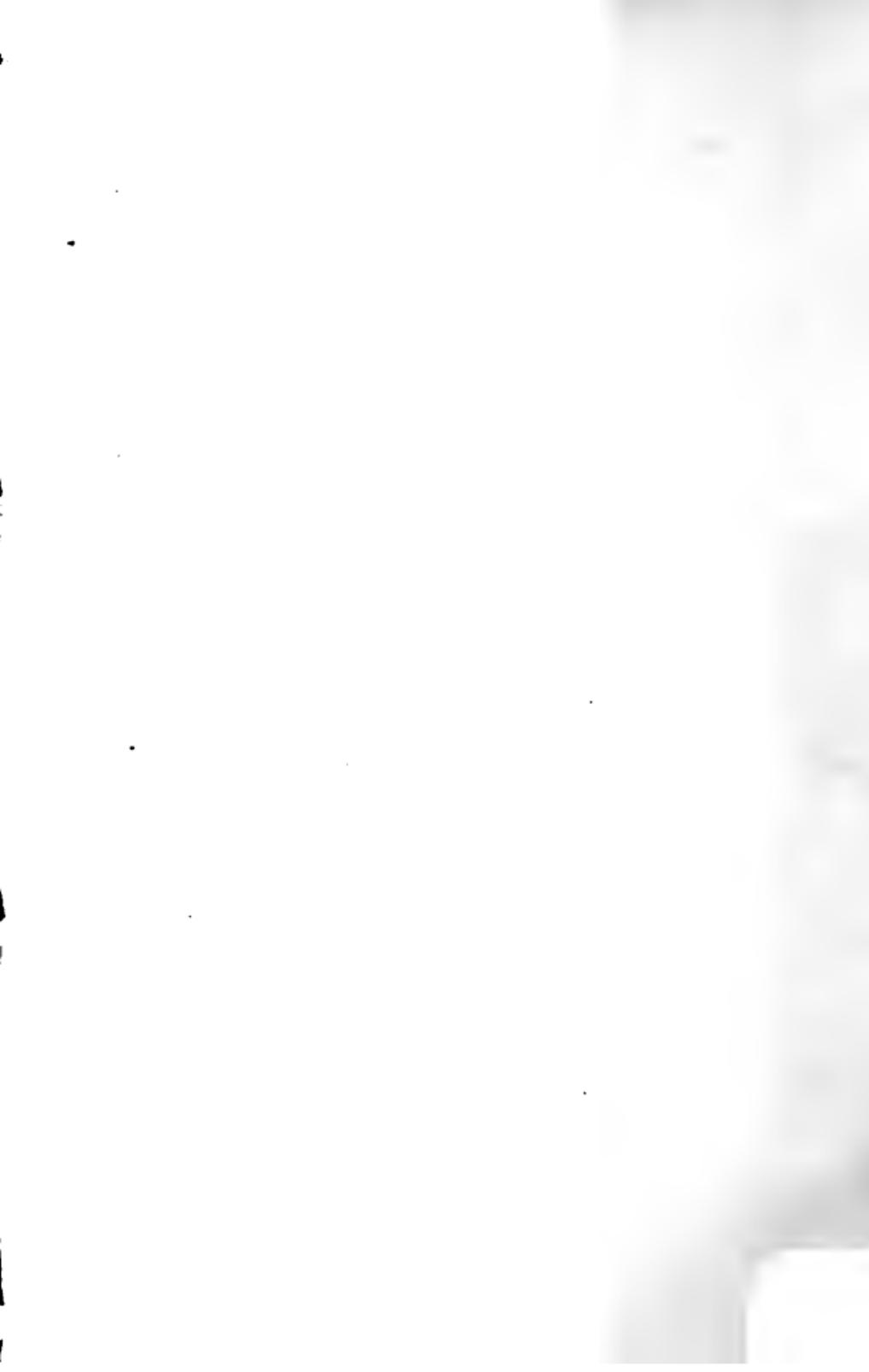
\* Penny Cyclopædia, v. 248.

last years of the seventeenth and the first of the eighteenth century many theories of the earth, which explained not only its structure, but its origin and its destiny—in other words, its whole history, past, present, and future, as well as such a task could be accomplished by the imagination working without materials, and without the aid of any other faculty.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.







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